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# GRAMMAR OF OLD TAMIL FOR STUDENTS 1 st Edition

Eva Wilden

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**GRAMMAR OF OLD TAMIL  
FOR STUDENTS**

1<sup>st</sup> Edition

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**GRAMMAR OF OLD TAMIL  
FOR STUDENTS**

1<sup>st</sup> Edition

Eva Wilden

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## Preface

A map of Old Tamil grammar would still show many blank patches, although the existing descriptive works are numerous, at least in comparison to what has been published for other Dravidian languages. One reason for this is that most of such descriptions have been written by people who approach the subject from the vantage point of modern Tamil and who see Old Tamil primarily as a precursor of their own language. Another reason is that the prolific, fascinating and invaluable tradition of *ilakkaṇam*, grammar, has been in certain respects as much of an obstacle as it has been of help in understanding. Moreover, the current grammatical representations of Old Tamil are lopsided in that they pay considerable and very detailed attention to morphology (which is in fact relatively simple) and next to none to syntax (which is in many languages hard to grasp and which, for Old Tamil, is now very hard to reconstruct fully). But it is perhaps an attitude of devotion to this ancient and remarkable literary language – a natural devotion may be, but one that has for political ends too often been whipped up into an unreflecting and distortive fervour – that has hampered the dispassionate study of Old Tamil. In consequence, the language is less well taught than it could be: to this day there is no grammar for students, no manuals, and few readers. Tamil has the aura of a religion, something not to be learned by the rod, but to be imbibed. It has become an emotive identity-marker for many Tamilians, and this often seems to mean that students from all backgrounds feel discouraged from asking questions about, for instance, how a given sentence is to be construed. Instead, they gradually school themselves to be content with a vague exposition of sentence-meanings that does not reveal details of sentence-structure.

That is the situation the Classical Tamil Winter and Summer Seminars (CTWS/CTSS) have been trying to remedy for the last fifteen years. This year the CTWS/CTSS went into its 16<sup>th</sup> year, which means that the beginners course was held for the 8<sup>th</sup> time. Although the Reader and the Grammar that grew out of these courses

are still far from adequate, significant progress has been made and it seems now time to put the Grammar to press so that it can serve a wider audience. The Reader will soon follow, but for now it has been put online on the NETamil website ([www.netamil.org](http://www.netamil.org)) under “Learning”, along with further (advanced) readers with full analytical glossaries, based on the material produced for the CTWS/CTSS. The grammar will doubtless continue to grow from continued scrutiny of the growing corpus whose language it attempts to describe, which we might characterise as almost all surviving Tamil literature of the first millennium. I say “almost”, since I am conscious that we are not making a concerted effort to work through the language of Tamil epigraphs. Since for most texts reliable editions, let alone statistics for their morphology and lexicon, are not available, the coverage is inevitably still patchy. Nonetheless, within the last ten years a number of critical editions have appeared and several more are under preparation by the NETamil team, and electronically searchable texts have also become markedly more numerous. Still, whenever I open a new book, I come across a form not yet included in these pages.

One strategy would be to distinguish strictly between the grammars of Early, Middle and Late Old Tamil as well as Middle Tamil, but such a periodisation, although it might make the task of grammatical description somewhat easier to order, would necessarily be distortive, since both absolute and relative chronology of Old Tamil literature is for the most part not well established and since many texts cover several strata. Moreover it would not be practical for students, who want a single reference work where they can find anything they might need. Thus both students and teachers will have to live with the fact that the area covered will continue to grow, along with the descriptive text and the account of syntax. Things might be speeding up because the community of scholars working in the field has definitely increased over the last ten years.

The book is still conceived as a companion volume to a one-month course, true to the original scheme of the CTWS/CTSS. It is thus divided into chapters that correspond to lessons numbered from 1 to 20, but arranged and numbered in such a way that the whole can be consulted as an independent grammar, starting with introductory

material, a treatment of sandhi, nominal morphology and syntax, verb morphology and syntax, poetics and metrics. The schedule page names the order in which the chapters are supposed to be taught and names the example texts brought together in the Reader. **Please note that examples throughout this grammar, when rendered in Tamil script, appear spaced according to scholarly conventions, namely with sandhi and metrical splitting, while the transcriptions in roman script mark instead the divisions between words.**

A select bibliography including the editions of the texts quoted as examples (in so far as no critical editions are available) and the works on grammar and lexicography mentioned in this grammar are added at the end.

There are many people I should thank for enabling me to bring together the material for this book and for helping me to correct it, first of all, of course, the scholars with whom I studied Tamil: S.A. Srinivasan, T.V. Gopal Iyer and T.S. Gangadharan, but also the colleagues from the *Caṅkam* project and now the NETamil project, who have been reading and discussing with me over all these years: my husband Jean-Luc Chevillard, Sascha Ebeling (with whom I first devised the Reader and with whom I was able to discuss the whole manuscript), Thomas Lehmann, G. Vijayavenugopal, T. Rajeswari, Indra Manuel, Emmanuel Francis, Suganya Anandakichenin, T. Rajarethinam, K. Nachimuthu, as well as all the students of the various CTWS and CTSS, many of them by now also colleagues, who have been coming to Pondicherry and asking questions. Special thanks for one final full round of discussions and correction go to the Hamburg team, Jonas Buchholz, Giovanni Ciotti, Victor D'Avella and Erin McCann. Further last-minute corrections were suggested by Hugo David. I am also grateful to Dominic Goodall and Charlotte Schmid, who first encouraged me to organise Tamil winter classes at the centre of the EFEO in Pondy. For the typesetting I thank T.V. Kamalambal. This book is the third to be published in the new NETamil series, generously funded by an Advanced Grant from the ERC.

Puducherry  
March 2018

Eva Wilden

## Abbreviations of Grammatical Terminology

|             |                       |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| abs.        | absolute              |
| acc.        | accusative            |
| adj.        | adjective             |
| adv.        | adverb                |
| C           | consonant             |
| comp.       | comparative           |
| dat.        | dative                |
| f.          | feminine              |
| f.v.        | finite verb           |
| gen.        | genitive              |
| h.          | honorific             |
| hab.fut.    | habitual future       |
| i.a.        | imperfective aspect   |
| id.         | ideophone             |
| inf.        | infinitive            |
| inst.       | instrumental          |
| inter.pron. | interrogative pronoun |
| ipt.        | imperative            |
| loc.        | locative              |
| m.          | masculine             |
| n.          | neuter                |
| neg.        | negative              |
| O           | object                |
| obl.        | oblique               |
| opt.        | optative              |
| P           | predicate             |
| p.a.        | perfective aspect     |
| p.n.        | proper name           |
| part.n.     | participial noun      |

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <i>pey.</i>  | <i>peyareccam</i>                         |
| pl.          | plural                                    |
| pron.n.      | pronominalised noun                       |
| S            | subject                                   |
| sg.          | singular                                  |
| soc.         | sociative                                 |
| sub.         | subjunctive                               |
| suff.        | suffix                                    |
| <sub>u</sub> | overshort - <i>u</i> deleted before vowel |
| V            | vowel                                     |
| v.n.         | verbal noun                               |
| voc.         | vocative                                  |
| v.r.         | verbal root                               |

### Schedule

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> week | <b>Bhakti (<i>Tēvāram, Tiruvāymoli</i>), <i>Tirukkuraḷ</i></b>              |
| Ch. 1                | nominal forms (non-marking of cases, word order)                            |
| Ch. 2                | nominal sentences (finite verb – participial noun – pronominalised noun)    |
| Ch. 3                | attribution (nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs)                          |
| Ch. 6                | clauses: <i>viṇaiyēccam</i> (absolutive/converb)                            |
| Ch. 7                | clauses: infinitive   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> week | <b><i>Mutolāyiram, Peruṅkāppiyam (Cilappatikāram, Cīvaka Cintāmaṇi)</i></b> |
| Ch. 8                | clauses: <i>peyareccam</i> , habitual future                                |
| Ch. 9a,b             | verbal roots (for <i>peyareccam</i> and other forms), verbal nouns          |
| Ch. 4                | string attribution (mixed nominal and verbal forms)                         |
| Ch. 10               | moods (verbal sentences, tenses/aspects)                                    |
| Ch. 11               | coordination and questions ( <i>-um, -ō, -kol, kollō</i> )                  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> week | <b>Poetics and Commentaries (<i>Nakkīraṇ</i>'s preamble, TP)</b>            |
| Ch. 12               | embedded clauses ( <i>eṇ, āku, pōl</i> )                                    |
| Ch. 13               | clauses: conditional (factual and hypothetical), concessive and causal      |
| Ch. 14               | negation ( <i>alil</i> , zero suffix, negative stem, double verb forms)     |
| Ch. 5                | denominative (pronominalised nouns as predicate nouns)                      |
| Ch. 15               | double verb forms, <i>muṟreccam</i> and auxiliaries                         |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> week | <b><i>Caṅkam (Puraṇānūru, Aiṅkuṟunūru, Kuṟuntokai, Naṟṟiṇai)</i></b>        |
| Ch. 16               | particles and word order ( <i>-ē</i> )                                      |
| Ch. 17               | modal particles ( <i>maṇ/maṇra, āl, amma, tilla, teyya</i> )                |
| Ch. 18               | circular construction ( <i>pūṭṭuvil</i> )                                   |
| Ch. 19               | the formulaic repertoires and formulae as syntactic matrices                |
| Ch. 20               | metre: <i>Ācīriyappā</i> and <i>Veṇpā</i>                                   |

## Introduction

For the purpose of this grammar, let us call classical Tamil the language that developed, or rather, was developed, out of the various dialects spoken throughout the southernmost part of the Indian subcontinent, as a literary medium and as a medium of intellectual discourse, during the course of the first millennium CE. Here, we shall neither be concerned with exact chronology, taking the beginning of the Common Era as a convenient starting point, nor with the relation of that entity to the language that has officially gained the title of “Classical Tamil” on the part of the Indian government in the year 2004. Our target is not the language of inscriptions, which starts considerably earlier, but the literary and theoretical works that have been preserved in manuscripts, all of them in metrical form, that is, the *Caṅkam*-corpus, the *Kīlkaṇakku*-works, the five “great poems” (Tamil *peruṅkāppiyam* ~ Skt. *mahākāvya*-) of which only three have survived, the Śaiva bhakti corpus called the Twelve *Tirumurai*, the Vaiṣṇava bhakti corpus called the *Nālāyirat Tivyappirapantam*, the grammatical treatises and thesauri that start with the *Tolkāppiyam*, a few other great poems that have not been included among the five, as well as a number of other poetic works that still belong to the same period but cannot be conveniently classified as part of a corpus. For an overview of genres and periods, see the attached folding sheets at the beginning.

Again for the sake of convenience we may distinguish three phases of Old Tamil, namely Early, Middle and Late Old Tamil, followed, around the turn of the 10<sup>th</sup> century, by Middle Tamil, in its turn followed, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, by Modern (Formal) Tamil. The table below lists the most tangible features of each phase along with some texts that belong to it, but it has to be kept in mind that not a single text (most of them anthologies) exhibits features of only one of these



phases. The reason for this is partly that many texts were generated over a longer period of time, but partly also that it is not always easy to distinguish temporal from regional variations.

Old Tamil: \*0-1000 AD

|                            |  |  |
|----------------------------|--|--|
| Early Old Tamil            | <i>Kuruntokai, Narriṇai, Aka-nānūru, Puranānūru, Aṇ-kurunūru, Patirruppattu, Pattuppāṭṭu</i>   | stable word order, particles, old pronouns, honorific, formulae, Āciryappā   |
| Middle Old Tamil           | <i>Kīlkkāṇakku, Cilappati-kāram, Paripāṭal, Antāti-s, Kalittokai</i>   | old morphology, new style/content<br>new pronouns + plural, word order and particle chaos, hybrid forms, rarely present tense, Venpā + <i>etukai</i> rhyme |
| Late Old Tamil             | <i>Tēvaram, Tiruvāymoḷi, Muttollāyiram, Cintāmaṇi, Tirukkōvaiyār, Periyatirumoḷi</i><br>[ <i>Kamparamāyaṇam</i> , 12 <sup>th</sup> c.] | metrical revolution + <i>etukai</i> , standardisation of present tense, plural and pronouns; less pronouns, fewer formulae, new vocabulary                 |
| Middle Tamil: 1000-1900 AD |  | new auxiliaries, (Commentary prose)  |

Modern Tamil: 19<sup>th</sup> century

As for the transition from Old to Middle Tamil, stipulated for example by Zvelebil 1957a, there are no statistics that would demonstrate a clear shift and further morphological changes. Until the literature of the second millennium has been treated in more detail, we may assume that two factors justify the designation, namely, firstly, the gradual vanishing of many older forms except in some frozen expressions and, secondly, the development of commentary prose.

The list found at the bottom of this page shows the most important morphological changes that occur in the transition from Early Old Tamil to Middle and Late Old Tamil. More important than morphology, however, are two shifts in orientation that concern the overall syntactic patterns of the language. To begin with, Early Old Tamil is a language with very little explicit morphological mark-up (especially with respect to case suffixes) and a correspondingly strict word order complemented by a system of particles for modes and tenses, not unlike what is known from languages such as Classical Chinese. Probably through the influence of literary Sanskrit along with the newly developing rhyme patterns (*etukai*), the strict word order is gradually weakened, to be supplanted by more explicit morphology in the course of time, although it never reaches the freedom of a highly inflected Indo-European language. The particle system simply disintegrates and is lost (except as metrical filler). Moreover, the verb in Early Old Tamil is better described as marked by aspect rather than by tense. The two old aspects, imperfective (present, future, hypothetical) and perfective (past, aorist, irreal), in most grammars simply called non-past and past, later become future and past respectively with the development of a modal auxiliary construction based on the verb *kil-tal*, “to be able to”, into the present tense in -கின்ற- *-kinr-*.

- personal pronouns: 1<sup>st</sup> singular nominative யான் *yān* > நான் *nān*  
 2<sup>nd</sup> singular oblique stem நின் *niñ* > உன் *uñ*
- plural suffixes: -கள் *-kaḷ* (first for neuter, then added to old honorific  
 -அர்/-ஆர் *-ar/-ār*, then gradually taking over)  
 -காள் *-kāḷ* for vocative  
 -மாள் *-mār* for 3<sup>rd</sup> plural  
 -மீர் *-mīr* for 2<sup>nd</sup> plural
- present tense: -கின்ற- *-kinr-*
- negative absolutive: -ஆமல் *-āmal*

- special conditionals: -ஏல் *-ēl* (after root, after *peyareccam* and finite verb, after noun)  
 -ஆகில் *-ākil*  
 -இல் *-il*  
 -ஆல் *-āl* (mostly already after absolutive, but also found after finite forms)
- special imperatives: -ஏல் *-ēl* (negative)  
 -மின்கள் *-minkaḷ* (old form plus plural suffix)  
 -ஈர்கள் *-īrkaḷ*

It is possible to be more specific about the genesis of the oldest corpus, that of the *Caṅkam*, at least with respect to those texts for which critical editions have appeared or are under preparation in the Pondicherry *Caṅkam* project. To briefly sum up a complicated process, after an undetermined number of centuries of oral transmission the first anthologies began to be compiled, probably under the Pāṇṭiya aegis. The oldest parts of the corpus are, in Akam (erotic genre), *Kuruntokai*, *Narriṇai*, *Akanānūru* and, in Puram (heroic genre), *Puranānūru*, though the latter two especially contain much younger material. Further in linguistic and poetic development, but still rather close appear the Cēra anthologies *Aiṅkurunūru* (Akam) and *Patirruppattu* (Puram). The first indication of anthologisation is the former invocation stanza of the *Kuruntokai*, now counted as *Kuruntokai* 1, but in fact a very early form of devotional poem dedicated to Murukaṅ, perhaps from the late 5<sup>th</sup> century. Probably in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century, or at least definitely before the pervasive sectarian splits of the bhakti period, there is evidence for the first hyper-anthology containing all the six texts mentioned so far, that is, both Pāṇṭiya and Cēra, on the initiative of the Pāṇṭiyas: We find preserved a series of five invocation stanzas by the hand of Pāratampāṭiya Peruntēvaṅār, and the conjecture is reasonable that there was a sixth in the lost beginning of the *Patirruppattu*.

In parallel, but slightly later, the songs now contained in the second hyper-anthology, the *Pattuppāṭṭu*, developed, with new advances in poetics, morphology and lexicon, and a growing number of Sanskrit loans. Very late, and probably related rather to the later Pāṇṭiya resurrection of the earliest poetry than to the earlier literary production itself, come the last two anthologies that we know today as elements of the *Eṭṭuttokai*, that is, the *Kalittokai* and the *Paripāṭal*. The first references to the actual hyper-anthologies *Pattuppāṭṭu* and *Eṭṭuttokai* are found in the grammatical commentary tradition from the 12<sup>th</sup> century onwards [for a detailed account, see Wilden 2014].

| time     | Text traditions  |                               |  |                   |                  |   |
|----------|--|-------------------------------|--|-------------------|------------------|---|
|          | Pāṇṭiya, Cēra, Cōla                                      |                               | Cēra                                       | Pāṇṭiya           |                  | Pāṇṭiya, Cēra, Cōla   |
|          | <i>Akam</i>  | <i>Puṛam</i>                  | <i>Akam/Puṛam</i>                          | <i>Akam</i>       | mixed            | mixed   |
| 1.-3. c. | <i>Kuṛuntokai</i><br><i>Narriṇai</i><br><i>Akanāṇūru</i> | <i>Puṛa-</i><br><i>nāṇūru</i> |  |                   |                  |   |
| 4. c.    | ↓  | ↓                             | <i>Aiṅkuṛunūru</i><br><i>Patirruppattu</i> |                   |                  | <i>Neṭunalvāṭai</i><br><i>Porunarārruppaṭai</i><br><i>Cīrupāṇārruppaṭai</i><br><i>Perumpāṇārruppaṭai</i>              |
| 5. c.    | ↓<br><br>KT 1  | ↓                             |  |                   |                  | <i>Malaiṛaṭukaṭām</i><br><i>Kuṛiṅcippāṭṭu</i><br><i>Paṭṭiṇappālai</i><br><i>Mullaiappāṭṭu</i><br><i>Maturaikkāñci</i> |
| 6. c.    | ↓  | ↓                             |  | <i>Kalittokai</i> | <i>Paripāṭal</i> | <i>Tirumurukārruppaṭai</i>  |
| 7. c.    | <i>kaṭavuḷ</i><br><i>vāḷttu-s</i>                        | →                             | →  | →                 | ?                |   |
|          | Pāṇṭiya  |                               |  | Pāṇṭiya           |                  | Pāṇṭiya, Cēra, Cōla   |
| 12.c.    | “ <i>Eṭṭuttokai</i> ”                                    |                               |  |                   |                  | “ <i>Pattuppāṭṭu</i> ”  |

table of basic chronology of the *Caṅkam* corpus

## **Lists of Literary Works of the First Millennium CE**

It is not easy to calculate the precise extent of the works listed below. Those in Ācīriyam metre are simply counted by line, those in stanzas, that is, from Veṅpā onwards, are counted by stanza (that is, four or, exceptionally, two lines). But since the various metres range from two metrical feet to eight metrical feet per line and since moreover the works in mixed metres also contain Ācīriyam passages of variable length regarded as stanzas, the count is very imprecise. Still, better some vague idea than no idea at all. The works included into text bodies belonging to the first millennium that were not composed within this time frame have been marked by square brackets.

### **Complete list of the *Eṭṭuttokai***

1. *Kuruntokai* (402 poems, 2504 lines; no commentary)
2. *Narriṇai* (400 poems, 4180 lines; no commentary)
3. *Akanānūru* (401 poems, 7151 lines; anonymous comm. on AN 1-90)
4. *Puranānūru* (400 poems, 5448 lines; anonymous comm. on PN 1-250)
5. *Aiṅkurunūru* (501+ poems, 2163 lines; anonymous commentary)
6. *Patirrupattu* (80+ poems, 1711 lines; anonymous commentary)
7. *Kalittokai* (150 poems, 4314 lines; comm. by Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar)
8. *Paripāṭal* (22+ poems, 1833 lines; comm. by Parimēlalakar)

### **Complete list of the *Pattuppāṭṭu* (3552 lines)**

1. *Tirumurukārruppaṭai* (317 l.; comm. by Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar, Parimēlalakar, etc.)
2. *Porumarārruppaṭai* (248 lines; comm. by Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar)
3. *Cirupaṇārruppaṭai* (269 lines; comm. by Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar)
4. *Perumpānārruppaṭai* (500 lines; comm. by Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar)
5. *Mullaippāṭṭu* (103 lines; comm. by Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar)
6. *Maturaikkāñci* (782 lines; comm. by Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar)

7. *Neṭunalvātai* (188 lines; comm. by Naccinārkkiniyar)  
 8. *Kuṛiṅcippāṭṭu* (261 lines; comm. by Naccinārkkiniyar)  
 9. *Paṭṭinappālai* (301 lines; comm. by Naccinārkkiniyar)  
 10. *Malaiṭaṭukaṭām* (583 lines; comm. by Naccinārkkiniyar)

**Complete List of *Paṭiṇeṅ Kīlkkanaṅku*:**

1. *Nālaṭiyār* (didactic, 400 stanzas; comm. by Patumaṅār, Tarumaṅār, etc.)  
 2. *Nāṇmaṅikkaṭikai* (didactic, anonymous comm.; 101 stanzas)  
 3. *Iṅṅānāṛpatu* (didactic, anonymous comm.; 40 stanzas)  
 4. *Iṅiyavaināṛpatu* (didactic, anonymous comm.; 40 stanzas)  
 5. *Kārnāṛpatu* (Akam, anonymous comm.; 40 stanzas)  
 6. *Kaḷavalināṛpatu* (Puram, anonymous comm.; 40 stanzas)  
 7. *Aintinaiyaiṅpatu* (Akam, anonymous comm.; 50 stanzas)  
 8. *Aintinaiyelupatu* (Akam, anonymous comm.; 69 stanzas)  
 9. *Tiṅaimoliyaiṅpatu* (Akam, anonymous comm.; 50 stanzas)  
 10. *Tiṅaimālainūṛraimpatu* (Akam, anonymous comm.; 154 stanzas)  
 11. *Tirukkuraḷ* (didactic, comm. by Maṅakkuṭavar, Parimēlaḷakar, etc.; 1330 couplets)  
 12. *Ācāraḱkōvai* (didactic, anonymous comm.; 100 stanzas)  
 13. *Paḷamoḷi* (didactic, anonymous comm.; 400 stanzas)  
 14. *Ciṛupaṅcamūlam* (didactic, anonymous comm.; 102 stanzas)  
 15. *Mutumoliḱkāñci* (didactic, anonymous comm.; 10 stanzas)  
 16. *Ēlāti* (didactic, anonymous comm.; 80 stanzas)  
 17. *Kainnilai* (Akam, anonymous comm.; 60 stanzas)  
 18. *Tirikaṭukam* (didactic, anonymous comm., 100 stanzas)  
 [19. *Iṅṅilai* (didactic; 45 stanzas) probably spurious]

**Complete list of the *Paññiru Tirumurai***

|           |  |  |
|-----------|--|--|
| TM I-III: | 1. Campantar:  | <i>Tēvāram</i> (385 decades)   |
| TM IV-VI: | 2. Appar:  | <i>Tēvāram</i> (312 decades)   |
| TM VII:   | 3. Cuntarar:   | <i>Tēvāram</i> (101 decades)   |
| TM VIII:  | 4. Māṇikkavācakar:   | <i>Tiruvācakam</i> (652 stanzas + 646 lines),<br><i>Tirukkōvaiyār</i> (400 stanzas; comm. by Pērācīriyar)        |
| TM IX:    | 5. Tirumāḷikaittēvar,<br>6. Karuvūrttēvar,<br>7. Pūnturutti Nampikāṭanampī,<br>8. Kaṇṭarāttittar,<br>9. Vēṇāṭṭaṭikal,<br>10. Tiruvāḷiyamutaṇār,<br>11. Puruṭṭamanampī,<br>12. Cētirāyar: | <i>Tiruvicaippā</i>  |
|           | 13. Cēntaṇār:  | <i>Tiruvicaippā</i> , <i>Tiruppallāṇṭu</i> (301 stanzas)   |
| TM X:     | 14. Tirumūlar:   | <i>Tirumantiram</i> , <i>Tantiram</i> 1-9 (3000 stanzas)   |
| TM XI:    | 15. Tiruvālavāyūṭaiyar:  | <i>Tirumukappācuram</i> (12 lines)   |
|           | 16. Kāraikkāl Ammaiṭṭāyār:   | <i>Arputat Tiruvantāti</i> ,<br><i>Tiruviraṭṭaimaṇimālai</i> ,<br><i>Tiruvalaṅkāṭṭu Patikam-s</i> (143 stanzas)  |
|           | 17. Aiyāṭikal Kātavār Kōṇ:   | <i>Kṣētirattiruveṇpā</i> (24 stanzas)  |
|           | 18. Cēramāṇ Perumāḷ:   | <i>Ponvaṇṇattantāti</i> ,<br><i>Tirukkayilāyaṇṇavulā</i> ,<br><i>Ārūrmummaṇikkōvai</i> (135 stanzas + 190 lines) |

19. Nakkīratēvar: *Kayilapāti Kaḷattipātiyantāti, Tiruvīṅkōymalai, Eluppatu, Tiruvalaṅcuḷi Mummaṅikkōvai, Tiruvelukūrṛirukkai, Peruntēvapāni, Kōppiracātam, Kār Eṭṭu, Pōrṛit Tirukkalivenpā, Tirumurukārruppaṭai, Tirukaṅṅappatēvar Tirumaṅam* (189 stanzas + 725 lines)
20. Kallātātēvar: *Tirukkaṅṅappatēvar Tirumaṅam* (38 lines)
21. Kapilatēvar: *Mūttanāyaṅār Tiruviraṭṭaimaṅimālai, Civaperumāṅ Tiruviraṭṭaimaṅimālai, Civaperumāṅ Tiruvantāti* (157 stanzas)
22. Paraṅātēvar: *Civaperumāṅ Tiruvantāti* (101 stanzas)
23. Iḷamperumāṅ Aṭikal: *Civaperumāṅ Tirumummaṅikkōvai* (30 stanzas)
24. Atirāvaṭikal: *Mūttapiḷḷayār Tirumummaṅikkōvai* (23 stanzas)
25. Paṭṭiṅattup Piḷḷaiyār: *Kōyil Nāṅmaṅimālai, Tirukkaḷumala Mummaṅikkōvai, Tiruṭṭaimarutūr Mummaṅikkōvai, Tiruvēkampamuṭaiyār Tiruvantāti, Tiruvorṛiyūr Orupā Orupatu* (192 stanzas)
- [26. Nampi Āṅṅār Nampi: *Tirunaraiyūr Vināyakar Tiruviraṭṭaimaṅimālai, Kōyil Tiruppaṅṅiyar Viruttam, Tiruttoṅṅar Tiruvantāti, Āḷuṭaiya Piḷḷaiyār Tiruvantāti, Āḷuṭaiya Piḷḷaiyār*



*Tiruccaṅpaiviruttam Āḷuṭaiya  
Piḷḷaiyār Mummaṅikkōvai Āḷuṭaiya  
Piḷḷaiyār Tiruvulāmālai, Āḷuṭaiya  
Piḷḷaiyār Tirukkalampakam,  
Āḷuṭaiya Piḷḷaiyār Tiruttokai,  
Tirunāvukkaracu Tēvar  
Tiruvēkāta Mālai (369 st./211 l.)*

TM XII: 27. Cēkkiḷār:

*Tiruttoṅṭar purāṇam =  
Periyapurāṇam (3634 st.)]*

### Complete List of the *Nālāyirat Tivyappirapantam*

1. Poykaiyālvār: *First Tiruvantāti* (100 stanzas)
2. Pūtattālvār: *Second Tiruvantāti* (100 stanzas)
3. Pēyālvār: *Third Tiruvantāti* (100 stanzas)
4. Tirumaḷicaiyā.: *Tiruccantaviruttam, Nāṅmukam Tiruvantāti* (220 stanzas)
5. Nammālvār: *Tiruviruttam, Tiruvācīriyam, Periyatiruvantāti, Tiruvāymoḷi* (1293 stanzas)
6. Periyālvār: *Periyālvār Tirumoḷi* (473 stanzas)
7. Āṅṭāl: *Tiruppāvai, Nācciyār Tirumoḷi* (173 stanzas)
8. Tirumaṅkaiyā.: *Periyatirumoḷi, Tirukuruntāṅṭakam, Tiruṅṭuntāṅṭakam, Tiruveḷukūrrirukkai, Cīriyatirumaṭal, Periyatirumaṭal* (1152 stanzas)
9. Kulacēkaraṅā.: *Perumāḷ Tirumoḷi* (104 stanzas)
10. Tiruppāṅā.: *Amalaṅātippirāṅ* (10 stanzas)
11. Toṅṭaratiṭoṭiyā: *Tirumālai, Tirupalliyelucci* (55 stanzas)
12. Madhurakaviyā.: *Kaṅṅinuṅ Cīruttāmpu* (11 stanzas)
- [13. *Irāmānujanūrrantāti* (108 stanzas)]

**List of first-millennium “Epics” = *Aimperuṅkāppiyam***

1. *Cilappatikāram* (5246 lines; anon. comm., comm. by Aṭiyārkkunallār)
2. *Maṇimēkalai* (4856 lines)
3. *Cīvaka Cintāmaṇi* (3145 stanzas; comm. by Nacciṅārkkīṇiyar)
4. *Valaiyāpati* [lost, except for some quotations]
5. *Kuṇṭalakēci* [lost, except for some quotations]

*Peruṅkatai* (ca. 16 000 lines; incomplete)

*Culāmaṇi* (2130 stanzas)

*Nīlakēci* (894 stanzas; comm. by Camayativākarar)

**Further miscellaneous poetic works of the first millennium**

*Pāṇṭikkōvai* (350 stanzas)

*Muttoḷḷāyiram* (107 stanzas)

*Nantikkalampakam* (113 stanzas)

*Pāratāveṇpā* (339 stanzas)

[*Kallāṭam* (100 poems = 3337 lines)]

## GRAMMAR

So far no comprehensive grammar of classical Tamil has been published. Among the works dealing also with pre-modern morphology Beythan 1943 and Andronov 1969 can be named, the former being especially useful for its excellent paradigms of the verbal classes, but written in German.<sup>1</sup> There are several grammars restricted to the *Caṅkam* corpus, the most voluminous being Rajam 1992 (without index). Specialised even further (on the *Patirrupattu*) but dealing extensively with the old verb forms is Agesthalingom 1979. Another sub-corpus (that of the poet Kapilar) is treated by Lehmann 1994, again in German. For a brief outline of Old Tamil language, see the article Lehmann 1998. None of them treats the far more important questions of syntax. One further drawback of all the existing grammars is that they had to rely on preliminary text editions with many forms edited out as dialectal or simply “wrong”. A comprehensive grammar based at last on the forthcoming critical editions is under preparation in Pondicherry. The goal of the present work, however, is to give an overview of both morphology and syntax of the Tamil language of the first millennium for didactic purposes into the hands of students.

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<sup>1</sup> Although conceived rather as a manual on later pre-modern formal Tamil, many old forms are included in Beythan’s book, if in footnotes, and his extensive remarks on syntax remain useful to this day.

## SCRIPT AND PHONETICS

### 0.1 Table of Letters

The Classical Tamil alphabet is not different from the modern one, except for one special rare letter called *āytam* (mostly used in sandhi). It is, like most Indian scripts, of an abugida type, that is, inherent in the consonant is the letter அ *a* unless cancelled by a dot above the letter (*pulli*). All other vowels are added to the consonant letter either with special characters or in consonant-vowel ligatures. The stand-alone vowel characters are restricted to the beginning of a verse. Except for gemination and nasals, consonant clusters do not exist. Single consonants are voiced if intervocalic or preceded by a nasal, consonants at the beginning of a word and double consonants are unvoiced.

#### Vowels

அ ஆ இ ஈ உ ஊ எ ஏ ஐ ஒ ஓ ஔ  
a ā i ī u ū e ē ai o ō au

#### Consonants

guttural: க் k ங் ṅ  
palatal: ச் c ஞ் ṅ  
retroflex: ட் ṭ ண் ṇ ள் ḷ  
dental: த் t ந் n  
labial: ப் p ம் m  
semi-vowel: ய் y ர் r ல் l வ் v  
alveolar: ற் ṛ ண் ṇ  
retroflex approximant: ழ் ḷ  
*āytam*: ஃ ḳ

## 0.2 Sandhi in Classical Tamil<sup>2</sup>

Sandhi in Classical Tamil is a complicated and controversial issue, not only because much of it allows for alternatives, but also because there are in fact several sets of rules (the earliest from the *Tolkāppiyam Eḷuttatikāram*), and it is often not clear who is following which set. In under-marked Tamil palm-leaf notation it is sandhi in interaction with metre that helps resolve a good number of ambiguities in the script, while at the same time retaining others that will be lost in more modern notation. The most notable case is the oblique form in -இன் *-in*, rendered in modern editions invariably as the locative -இல் *-il*, in sandhi both -இன் *-in*. That is one reason why scribes and early editors painstakingly followed the rules, although it is not always clear which rules exactly. Text editions from the 1940s onwards have gradually done away with sandhi, up to present-day editions which keep just the bare-bone modern Tamil prose rules. [For earlier lists, see Andronov 1969, §§ 15-23, and Beythan 1943, §§ 21-28.]

The first rule that confuses students is that no word, or, properly speaking, no metrical foot (*cīr*), is allowed to begin with a vowel, except at the very beginning of a poem. For that reason the final consonant of any word at the end of a metrical foot is combined with a vowel beginning the next word/*cīr*.

### Vowel sandhi

Final அ, ஆ, உ, ஊ, ஒ, ஓ *a, ā, u, ū, o, ō* (back vowels) both within the word and at word boundaries insert the glide -வ- *-v-* before any

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<sup>2</sup> This list is an elaboration of the original one made by Sascha Ebeling for the first CTSS.

other vowel: சேர்ப்ப வோம்புமதி *cērppa-v-ōmpumati*, “Man from the coast, beware!”

Final இ, ஈ, எ, ஏ, ஐ *i, ī, e, ē, ai* (front vowels) both within the word and at word boundaries insert the glide -y- before any other vowel: கொன்றை யிணர் *konrai-y-iṅar*, “cluster of laburnum”.

Elision of the final vowel is mostly restricted to final -உ -u, counted as over-short (metrically discounted) unless at the end of a two-syllable word with short vowel and single consonant (திரு *tiru*, “Śrī”). The over-short final -u is elided before any vowel: வண்டு இனம் > வண்டினம் *vanṭu + iṅam = vanṭiṅam*, “swarm of bees”.

Overshort -உ -u followed by ய- y- becomes over-short (metrically discounted) இ- i-:

வெள் கோட்டு யானை *veḷ + kōṭṭu + yānai* > வெண்கோட் டியானை *veṅkōṭṭiyānai* “white tusked elephant”<sup>3</sup>

Exceptions are made for two-syllable adjectives ending in -u, although not regarded as over-short in the grammatical tradition. Such an adjective if followed by a vowel has mostly two options, namely either lengthening its first vowel or doubling the consonant:

சிறு இலை *ciru + ilai* > சிற்றிலை *cirrilai* or சீறிலை *cīrilai*, “small leaf”<sup>4</sup>, but only அரு இரவு *aru + iravu* > ஆரிரவு *āriravu*, “difficult night”.

The lengthening of the vowel also applies to some numerals and to the sociative suffix -ஓடு:

ஒரு பெயர் *oru peyar*, “one name”, but ஒரூர் *ōrūr*, “one village”

<sup>3</sup> A rare and probably hypercorrect parallel is கான் *kān* + யாறு *yāru* > கானியாறு *kāniyāru*, “forest river”.

<sup>4</sup> A rare additional possibility is சிறியிலை *ciriyilai*, possibly a precursor of the modern adjectival form சிறிய *ciriyā*.

எழு பிறப்பு *eḷu pirappu*, “seven births”, but ஏழுலகு *eḷulaku*, “seven worlds”

பெடையொடு சேவல் *peṭaiyoṭu cēval*, “the rooster with [its] female”, but பிணையோ டிரலை *piṇaiyō ṭiralai* ~ *piṇaiyōṭ<sub>u</sub> iralai*, “the Iralai stag with [its] doe”

Exceptions are made for some monosyllabic adjectives and some pronouns:

செம் அடி *cem + aṭi* > சேவடி *cēvaṭi*, “red foot”

செம் இழை *cem + iḷai* > சேயிழை *cēyilai*, “red jewel”

வெம் வரை *vem + varai* > வெவ்வரை *vevvarai*, “hot mountain”

அ- இடை *a- + iṭai* > ஆயிடை *āyiṭai*, “in between”

அது -ஏ *atu + -ē* > ஆதே *ātē* or அஃதே *aktē*, “that”

An exceptional vowel elision is made with an optative followed by any form of the quotative verb *என்னுதல் ennutal*, “to say”. The form வருகின்றாள் *varukenrāl* may either be understood as வருகு என்றாள் *varuku enrāl*, “she said ‘I will come’”, or as வருக என்றாள் *varuka enrāl*, “she said ‘you may come’”.

Exceptional cases for -அ -*a* merging with அ- *a-* into -அ- -*a-* are found in some particle combinations, such as மன்றம்ம *maṇṇamma* (for மன்ற *maṇṇa* + அம்ம *amma*) and in *peyareccam* compounds with the comparative stem அ(ன்)னை- *a(n)ṇai-*, “to be like that”, as in மறந்தனையேன் *maranta + aṇaiyēn*, “I am like someone who has forgotten”.

## Consonant sandhi

The nasal *m* followed by a consonant assimilates within the word and at word boundaries into the class nasal:

$m + k > nk$  பெரும் குன்று *perum + kunru* > பெருங்குன்று  
*perunkunru*, “big hill”

$m + c > \tilde{nc}$  அம் சிலம்பு *am + cilampu* > அஞ்சிலம்பு *añcilampu*,  
“pretty anklet”

$m + t > nt$  குறும் தொகை *kurum + tokai* > குறுந்தொகை  
*kuruntokai*, “anthology of short [poems]”

In compounds or for a case relation, final -ம் -*m* may be substituted by the gemination of the following consonant:

$m + k/c/t/p > kk/cc/tt/pp$  கமலம் கண் *kamalam + kaṇ* >  
கமலக்கண் *kamalakkaṇ* “lotus eye”  
நம் துறந்து *nam + turantu* >  
நத்துறந்து *natturantu*, “having  
abandoned us”

Similarly, in compounds or for a case relation, final -ம் -*m* may be dropped before வ்- *v-* and ம்- *y-*: புகர்முக வேழம் *pukar muka(m)*  
*vēlam*, “elephant bull with a spotted face”, காண யானை *kāna(m)*  
*yānai*, “forest elephant”.

Final -ம் -*m* followed by a nasal, ம்- *m-*, ந்- *n-*, ஞ்- *ñ-*, is simply dropped, unless -ம் -*m* is at the end of a monosyllabic word with a short vowel, in which case it is assimilated to the class nasal.

$m + m > m$  நாமம் மாறும் *nāmam + mārum* > நாமமாரும்  
*nāmamārum* “the name will change”  
 $m + n > n$  மரம் நீண்டது *maram + nīṇṭatu* > மரநீண்டது  
*maranīṇṭatu* “the tree grew long”  
 $m + m > mm$  செம் மண் *cem + maṇ* > செம்மண் *cemmaṇ* “red  
earth”  
 $m + n > nn$  வெம் நீர் *vem + nīr* > வெந்நீர் *vennīr* “hot water”  
 $m + \tilde{n} > \tilde{n}\tilde{n}$  தம் ஞாண் *tam + ñāṇ* > தஞ்ஞாண் *taññāṇ* “their  
string”





- $\underline{n} + t > \underline{nr}$  or  $\underline{rr}$  என் தோழி *en + tōli* > என்றோழி *enrōli*, “my friend”, நின் துறந்து *niṅ + turantu* > நின்றதுறந்து *nir\_rurantu*, “abandoning you”
- $\underline{n} + p > \underline{rp}$  இறும்பின் பாம்பு *irumpiṅ pāmpu* > இறும்பிற் பாம்பு *irumpir pāmpu*, “snake in the thicket”, but தலைவன் பாங்கன் *talaivan pāṅkaṅ*, “the friend of the hero”, துன்பம் *tunpam*, “sorrow”

Final -ய் -y can cause ம- *m-* to geminate: பொய் மொழி *poy + moḷi* > பொய்ம்மொழி *poymmoḷi*, “false word”

Final -ல் -l can change into alveolar nasal or stop in quite an astonishing number of circumstances, many of them optional.

- $\underline{l} + k > \underline{rk}$  திரள்கால் குவளை *tiraḷ-kāl kuvalai* > திரள்காற் குவளை *tiraḷ-kār kuvalai*, “round-stemmed blue water-lily”
- $\underline{l} + c > \underline{rc}$  or  $\underline{nc}$  இல் செறிப்பு *il + cerippu* > இற்செறிப்பு *ircerippu*, “being confined in the house”; மெல் சாயல் *mel + cāyal* > மென்சாயல் *meṅcāyal*, “soft beauty”
- $\underline{l} + p > \underline{rp}$  or  $\underline{np}$  நுதல் பசப்பு *nutal + pacappu* > நுதற்பசப்பு *nutar pacappu*, “pallor of the forehead”, வல் புலம் *val + pulam* < வன்புலம் *vanpulam*, “hard soil”
- $\underline{l} + t > \underline{r}$  or  $\underline{nr}$  or  $\underline{rr}$  or  $\underline{kr}$  அழல் துடங்கினாள் *alal + tuṭaṅkiṅal* > அழ றுடங்கினள் *alaruṭaṅkiṅal*, “she started to cry”; நல் தாய் *nal + tāy* > நற்றாய் *narrāy* “real mother”; அல் திணை *al + tiṅai* > அஃதிணை *aktiṅai*, “non-class” = neuter
- $\underline{l} + m > \underline{nm}$  சொல் மாலை *col + mālai* > சொன்மாலை *conmālai*, “word garland”

$l + n > \underline{n}$  or  $\underline{nn}$  நுதல் நீவி *nutal nīvi* > நுதனீவி *nutaṇīvi*, “stroking the forehead”; நல் நகர் *nal + nakar* > நன்னகர் *nannaṅkar*, “good mansion”

Final -ள் - $l$  changes into its class nasal or stop within a word or compound and optionally at word boundaries:

$l + k > \underline{tk}$  or  $\underline{nk}$  மகள் *makaḷ* + -கு *-ku* > மகட்கு *makaṭku*, “to the daughter”; வெள் குடை *veḷ + kuṭai* > வெண்குடை *veṅkuṭai*, “white parasol”; but வருந்தினள் கொல்லோ *varuntinaḷ-kollō*, “did she suffer?”

$l + c > \underline{tc}$  or  $\underline{nc}$  ஒள் சுடர் *oḷ + cuṭar* < ஒண்சுடர் *oṅcuṭar*, bright glow”

$l + p > \underline{tp}$  or  $\underline{np}$  கேட்ப *kēṭpa*, inf. of கேள்-தல் *kēḷ-tal*, “to hear”; மகள் போக்கிய தாய் *makaḷ + pōkkiya tāy* > மகட்போக்கிய தாய் *makaṭpōkkiya tāy*, “the mother who had let her daughter go”; but மீன்கொள் பரதவர் *mīn koḷ paratavar*, “fish-taking fishermen”; ஒன்பழம் *oṅpalam*, “bright fruit”

$l + t > \underline{t}$  or  $\underline{tt}$  ஒளிறு வாள் தாணை *oḷiru vāḷ + tānai* > ஒளிறுவாட் டாணை *oḷiruvāṭ ṭānai*, “an army with shining swords”; நாள் தொறும் *nāḷ + tōrum* > நாடோறும் *nāṭōrum* “daily”

$l + m > \underline{nm}$  பைய்யுள் மாலை *paiyyuḷ + mālai* > பைய்யுண் மாலை *paiyyuṅ mālai*, “sorrowful evening”

$l + n > \underline{n}$  or  $\underline{nn}$  தெள் நீர் *teḷ + nīr* > தெண்ணீர் *teṅṅīr*, “clear water”; வாள் நுதல் *vāḷ nutal* > வாணுதல் *vāṇutal*, “bright forehead”

## Consonant gemination

க் *k*, ச் *c*, த் *t*, ப் *p* undergo gemination:

- after the accusative suffix -ஐ *-ai*.
- after the dative suffix -(உக்)கு *-(uk)ku*.
- after -உ *-u* preceded by a double consonant (as in the oblique case).
- after the demonstrative clitics அ- *a-*, இ- *i-*, உ- *u-* and after எ- *e-* (also after இந்த *inta*, அந்த *anta*, எந்த *enta*).
- after -அ *-a* of the infinitive.
- after -இ *-i* of the absolutive (including the forms ஆய் *āy* and போய் *pōy*).
- after -ஆ *-ā* of the positive absolutive:  
(கண்புதையாக் குருகி *kaṇputaiyā-k-kuruki*, “nearing [her], covering [her] eyes” AN 9.21).
- after -ஆ *-ā* of the negative *peyareccam* (relative participle):  
முதிராத்திங்கள் *mutirā-t-tinkal*, “immature moon”, AN KV.11.
- after monosyllabic words ending in a long vowel.
- in compounds (of *karmadhāraya* or *genitive-tatpuruṣa* kind) after mono- and disyllabic neuter nouns ending in a vowel or -ய் *-y*, -ர் *-r*, -ழ் *-l*: வீதிக்கதவு *vīti-k-katavu* “street door”, அமர்க்கண் *amar-k-kaṇ*, “beautiful eyes”, கீழ்க்கணக்கு *kīl-k-kaṇakku*, “minor series”.

Gemination does *not* occur:

- after a finite verb form.

[- after -ஆ -*ā* of the negative absolutive:

உண்ணாபோனான் *uṇṇā-pōṇān* “without having eaten, he went off’].<sup>6</sup>

- after a vocative form.

- after a verbal root.

- after an imperative singular (= verbal root).

- after the clitics -எ -*ē*, -ஓ -*ō*, -ஆ -*ā*.

- after the (declension) endings -இலிருந்து -*iliruntu*, -ஓடு -*oṭu*, -  
இனின்று -*iṇinru*, -உடைய -*uṭaiya*.

- after the pronouns இது *itu*, அது *atu*, எது *etu*, இவை *ivai*, அவை  
*avai*, எவை *evai*, நீ *nī*.

- after என்ன *enna*, எத்தனை *ettanai*, எல்லா *ellā*, பல *pala*, சில *cila*.

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<sup>6</sup> This beautiful rule does not seem to conform with reality; a spot check in *Akanāṇūru* and *Narriṇai* revealed that there is about an even distribution of gemination and non-gemination.

## NON-VERB WORD CLASSES

Old Tamil knows three stages of noun inflection for marking case relations. The first stage is the zero mark that may correspond to the nominative of Indo-Aryan systems, which is used for the subject. But since Early Old Tamil prefers to denote case relation by word order, zero marking leaves room for any other case-relationship, too. The second stage is the oblique minimally marked by gemination of the final consonant, by an oblique stem in -த்து *-ttu* for words ending in -ம் *-m*, or by doubling of the last consonant (mostly for words ending in -டு/-று *-tu/-ru*), or by the oblique suffix -இன் *-in*. The suffix -இன் *-in* may also be added (as a sort of double oblique mark), to any of the others.<sup>7</sup> This marks a case other than nominative and is liberally employed.<sup>8</sup> The third stage, then, is the actual explicit marking for case, partly with the help of suffixes, partly with the help of postpositions. For some cases the fluidity is enormous, and some are hardly ever marked.

### 1.1 Nouns: types and declension

#### 1.1.1 Cases/Non-marking of Cases

zero = nom.

(voc. = nom. or loss of ending in m.sg.: நாடன் > நாட or  
நாடா *nāṭaṅ* > *nāṭa* or *nāṭā* “O man from the land”)<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Another possible place holder for the case suffix in metrical texts is the oblique of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person personal and reflexive pronoun தன்/தம் *taṅ/tam*: அரசன் தன்னை *aracaṅ taṅṅai*, “the king (acc.)”.

<sup>8</sup> This was never conceptualised in the Tamil grammatical tradition because already the *Tolkāppiyam* implements the Sanskrit case system of seven cases in order to describe Tamil.

<sup>9</sup> Nouns in -ஐ *-ai* may have a vocative in -ஆய் *-āy*: அன்னை *annaṅai* > அன்னாய் *annāy*, “o mother”; later the final syllable may be lengthened: தேரழி *tōḷi* > தேரழீ *tōḷī* or தேரழீஇ *tōḷīi*, “o friend”, நுதல் *nutal* > நுதால் *nutāl* “o [you with a] forehead”, பேதைகள் *pētaikaḷ* > பேதைகாள் *pētaikāḷ*, “o foolish girls”.

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| oblique | -இன் <i>-in</i> : நிலவு > நிலவின் <i>nilavu &gt; nilavin</i> ,<br>“moonlight”<br><br>-த்து <i>-ttu</i> : மரம் > மரத்து/(மரத்தின்) <i>maram &gt; marattu</i> /<br>( <i>marattin</i> ), “tree”<br><br>geminat <u>ion</u> : கோடு > கோட்டு/(கோட்டின்), <i>kōṭu &gt;</i><br><i>kōṭṭu/(kōṭṭin)</i> , “tusk”, ஆறு > ஆற்று/(ஆற்றின்) <i>āru &gt;</i><br><i>ārru/(ārrin)</i> , “path, river”  |
| cases   | dative -உக்கு <i>-(uk)ku</i><br><br>locative -ஆன் <i>-ān</i> , (-இல் <i>-il</i> ) <sup>10</sup> , -அகத்து <i>-akattu</i> , -இடை<br><i>-itai</i> , -கண் <i>-kaṇ</i> , -வயின் <i>-vayin</i> , -மருங்கின் <i>-maruṅkin</i> ,<br>-முதல் <i>-mutal</i> , -தலை <i>-talai</i> , -மாட்டு <i>-māṭṭu</i> , -உள் <i>-ul</i> ;<br>-தேளத்து <i>-tēttu</i> , -மேன <i>-mēṇa</i> , (etc.)<br><br>sociative -ஒடு <i>-oṭu</i> / (-உடன் <i>-uṭan</i> )<br><br>instrumental -ஆல் <i>-āl</i> / -ஆன் <i>-ān</i> ; -ஒடு <i>-oṭu</i><br><br>accusative -ஐ <i>-ai</i><br><br>genitive -அது <i>-atu</i> ; possessive also: -உடை <i>-uṭai</i> (later<br>-உடைய <i>-uṭaiya</i> ) / -கெழு <i>-keḷu</i><br><br>(ablative = comparison -இன் <i>-in</i> <sup>11</sup> ; later -நின்று <i>-ninru</i> ) |

The only case marked fairly regularly is the dative, corresponding to the indirect object. Additional functions of the dative are the dative of direction and the frequent possessive still found in modern Tamil (மாற்கு ஆள் *mārku āl*, “servant of Māl”).

<sup>10</sup> The official locative postposition *-il* (derived from the noun *il*, “house”), ubiquitously printed by modern editors where, in fact, due to sandhi it could also be interpreted as the oblique in -இன் *-in*, is in fact a late-comer in the texts, as can be seen from the fact that the three old Akam anthologies (KT, NA, AN) contain less than a dozen definitive instances.

<sup>11</sup> Comparative means here a simple comparative particle, often combined with others such as அன்ன *anna*: காலின் சென்று *kālin cenru*, “gone like the wind” (NA 249.1), கொழுந்தின் அன்ன *koḷuntin anna*, “like a tendril” (AN 9.2).

Locative is frequently marked, either by its case suffix or by a large number of postpositions, the majority of which also occur as regular nouns with a clear semantic meaning. Among the remaining cases sociative is the only one found more often than occasionally; besides by -ஒடு *-otu* (in sandhi before vowel -ஒடு *-ōtu*) it can also be expressed by -உடன் *-uṭaṇ*. Instrumental, for instrument and for reason, may be marked in -ஆல் *-āl* or -ஆன் *-ān* (frequently falling together in sandhi); rarely a sociative suffix has instrumental meaning and vice versa. Accusative -ஐ *-ai*, the case of the direct object, is rarely marked (which is still true in modern Tamil for the inanimate direct object). One reason for marking it is deviation from the regular word order of Subject – Object. The genitive, too, is rarely marked, and the ablative has entered the official Tamil case system only because it is there in Sanskrit and is predominantly represented by the comparative suffix -இன் *-in*. Late in the first millennium there is an occasional *vinaiyēccam* நின்று *-ninru* freezing into a postposition that expresses the idea of moving away from something (literally “after having stayed in x”), followed by the modern -இலிருந்து *-iliruntu* based on similar semantics (“having been in x”).

In a passive construction the agent may be marked by an instrumental (late: TVM 8.8.11.2f. திருமாலால் | அருளப்பட்ட சடகோபன் *tirumālāl | aruḷappaṭṭa caṭakōpaṇ*, “Caṭakōpaṇ who is graced by Tirumāl”), and with a neuter singular verbal noun the agent may be marked by a dative, possibly developed out of the possessive dative (Poy 10.1-3 மண்ணும் மலையும் மறி கடலும் மாருதமும் | விண்ணும் விழுங்கியது ...ஆழியாய்க்கு *maṇṇum malaiyum mari kaṭalum mārutamum | viṇṇum viḷuṅkiyatu ... āḷiyāyckku*, “Earth, mountain, churning sea, wind and sky were swallowed ... by you with the discus”).



### 1.1.2. Types of Nouns – List of Nominal Suffixes

Noun formation and the types of suffixes employed are an understudied area; both morphological and semantic studies are as good as absent. The only list of suffixes in the available grammars is found in Zvelebil 1967. The list below is without doubt incomplete, and explanations of use are rather simplistic. As far as genders are concerned, Tamil distinguishes only “high-class” (*uyar-tiṇai*), that is, animate, as male and female, and “low-class” (*akriṇai*), that is, everything else including abstract nouns, as neuter. The notion of being male or female is generally expressed by the pronominal secondary suffixes (see below), but a few nouns have special masculine or feminine endings.

root nouns                      Very common are nominal stems that are identical to verbal roots: அணி *ani*, “to adorn/adornment”; சுடர் *cuṭar*, “to glow/glow”  
A minimal modification is the occasional verbal root with lengthened vowel: பெறு *peru*, “to obtain” > பேறு *pēru*, “benefit”

primary suffixes:

-உ/வு *-(v)u*                      forming neuter nouns often freely variable with *-am*

-அம் *-am*                          நெஞ்சு/நெஞ்சம் *neñcu/neñcam*, “heart”

-ஆ *-ā*                                often freely variable with *-u*: நிலவு/நிலா *nilavu/nilā*, “moonlight”

-அன் *-an*                          distinction (sometimes free variation with *-அம் -am*): நலம் *nalam*, “goodness, beauty”, but நலன் *nalan*, “virginity”

(-அர் *-ar*                              forming adjectives: காமர் *kāmar*, “desirable”)

- உள் *-uḷ* forming neuter nouns; less productive: செய்யுள் *ceyyuḷ*, “metrical text”, பைய்யுள் *paiyyuḷ*, “sorrow”, விளையுள் *viḷaiyuḷ*, “produce” (NA 45.9)
- வி/ச்சி/த்தி *-vi/cci/tti* forming feminine nouns: புலைச்சி *pulaicci* “washer woman”, பனைத்தோளி *panaittōḷi*, “she with bamboo shoulders”
- இ *-i* forming masculine agent nouns: ஏந்தி *ēnti* “holder” (in bhakti)
- வு/(ப்)பு *-vu/(p)pu* forming abstract nouns from verbal roots: செய்வு/செய்பு *ceyvū/ceypu*, “doing”
- வை *-vai* forming abstract nouns from verbal roots: அளவை *aḷavai*, “measure”
- மை *-mai* forming nouns (in fact to tradition the basic form from which adjectives are derived): பெருமை *perumai*, “greatness”, அருமை *arumai*, “difficulty”, but also used on verbal roots ஆண்மை *āṇmai*, “courage”, உடைமை *uḍaimai*, “possession”
- (க்)கை *-(k)kai* செய்கை *ceykai*, “action”, வாழ்க்கை *vāḷkkai*, “livelihood”
- (ச்)சி *-(c)ci* புணர்ச்சி *puṇarcci*, “union”
- (த்)தி *-(t)ti* செய்தி *ceyti*, “action”
- அல்/(த்)தல் *-al/(t)tal* forming verbal nouns<sup>12</sup>: செயல்/செய்தல் *ceyal/ ceytal*, “to do”, புணரல்/புணர்தல்

<sup>12</sup> The verbal noun in *-தல் -tal* is the traditional form used to refer to a verb in the grammatical tradition. Note that the short form in *-அல் -al* is homophonous with the negative root imperative: செயல் *ceyal* can be “to do” or “don’t do”.

*puṇaral/ puṇartal*, “to unite”, but புணர்த்தல்  
*puṇarttal*, “to bring together”

secondary suffixes:

The main type of secondary suffix is the so-called pronominal suffix usually alternating between short and long vowels in almost all cases. In noun formation they are used for masculine, feminine and honorific in the type of pronominalised nouns that are lexicalised: அந்தணன் *antaṇaṇ*, “brahmin”, வினைவர் *viṇaivar*, “workers”; the feminine often rather adopts the ending -இ *-i* for this type of noun: கள்வன் *kaḷvaṇ* “robber”, but கள்வி *kaḷvi*, “female robber”. Note that also participial nouns are frequently lexicalised (cf. the introduction to Verbs below).

It is also with their help that singular and plural are marked. Marking of plural is optional, especially in the case of the neuter. Old Tamil does not distinguish in the high-class, that is, with animate nouns, between honorific and plural; the suffix -அர்/-ஆர் *-ar/-ār* denotes both and the decision has to be made by context. From bhakti times onwards the modern plural suffix -கள் *-kaḷ* filters in, first with neuters, then also with animate beings. For a long time it was possible to combine honorific and plural suffixes.

Their second function is with participial nouns, a very important category in Old Tamil syntax, as well as with the type of pronominalised nouns which are not lexicalised, but used to creatively form predicate nouns in a sort of denominative, called *kurippuvinaṇai*, “verb by intention” in the Tamil tradition. For both these formations the whole range of persons, numbers and genders is employed.

singular

1. -என்/-ஏன் -*en/-ēn*
2. -இ -*i*, -ஆய் -*āy*, -ஐ -*ai*, -ஓய்/-ஓய் -*oy/-ōy*
- 3.m. -அன்/-ஆன் -*an/-ān*, -ஒன்/-ஓன் -*on/-ōn*
- 3.f. -அள்/-ஆள் -*aḷ/-āḷ*, -ஒள்/-ஓள் -*oḷ/-ōḷ*
- 3.n. -(அ)து -*(a)tu*

plural

1. -அம்/-ஆம் -*am/-ām*, -எம்/-ஏம் -*em/-ēm*, -ஓம்/-ஓம் -*om/-ōm*
2. -இர்/-ஈர் -*ir/-īr* (-ஈர்கள் -*īrkaḷ*, -மீர் -*mīr*, -மீர்கள் -*mīrkaḷ*)
- 3.h. -அர்/-ஆர் -*ar/-ār*, -ஓர்/-ஔர் -*or/-ōr* (-மர் -*mar*, -மார் -*mār*)  
(pl. -கள் -*kaḷ*, -அர்கள்/-ஆர்கள் -*arkaḷ/-ārkaḷ*)<sup>13</sup>
- 3.n. -அ/-ஐ -*a/-ai* (pl. -கள் -*kaḷ*)

irr. feminine plural: மகளிர் *maḷir*, பெண்டிர் *peṇṭir*, “women”; irr. pl. கேளிர் *kēḷir*, “relatives”

Note that in any ending, pronominal or verbal, the distinction between long and short எ/ஏ *e/ē*, ஒ/ஓ *o/ō* is an arbitrary one, since the length of these vowels was not marked in Tamil palm-leaf manuscript notation. Modern editors chose *ad libitum*. The existence of the dichotomy, however, is supported by the fact that we have a visible variance between அ/ஆ *a/ā* and இ/ஈ *i/ī*.

There remains a small group of suffixes that are used for the formation of secondary verbal nouns, namely perfective and negative ones:

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| -அமை - <i>amai</i> | செய்தமை <i>cey-t<sub>u</sub>-amai</i> , “the having done”      |
| -ஆமை - <i>āmai</i> | செய்யாமை <i>cey-y-ā-mai</i> , “the not doing, not having done” |

<sup>13</sup> The pl. suffix -*kaḷ* (in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person) can take a lengthened vocative form -*kāl*.

### 1.1.3 Indo-Aryan Loan Words

From the earliest attested texts onwards Tamil admitted loan words from Indo-Aryan, both Sanskrit and Prakrit. Vaidyanathan 1971 collected the ones occurring in Old Tamil (for him the *Caṅkam* corpus, the *Kīlkkāṇakku* and the *Cilappatikāram*), but since he lists only one occurrence per word it is impossible to gain a realistic impression of frequency and distribution. Burrow/Emeneau's *Dravidian Borrowings from Indo-Aryan* has a broader textual outlook but is a very slim volume and only scratches the surface. The first real statistics come with the glossaries to the critical editions of the *Caṅkam* corpus. It is obvious that the number of loans increases over time and virtually explodes with the bhakti works.

Rules for assimilating Sanskrit to Tamil have been laid down in the 12<sup>th</sup>-century grammar *Vīracōḷiyam*. Many derivations are fairly transparent and regular, others are markedly less so, one of the famous examples being Skt. *asura-* > Tamil அஷுணன் *avuṇaṅ*. A few remarks may suffice here.

The first obvious consequence from borrowing is a loss of information, because Tamil in writing does not distinguish between voiced and unvoiced consonants and it does not have aspirates:

|                     |               |                                 |   |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---|
| <i>k, kh, g, gh</i> | > க் <i>k</i> | <i>sanga-, sangha-, śaṅkha-</i> | > சங்கம்<br><i>caṅkam</i> , “union, congregation,<br>conch” |
| <i>c, ch, j, jh</i> | > ச் <i>c</i> | <i>icchā-</i>                   | > இச்சை <i>iccai</i> , “wish”                               |
| <i>ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh</i> | > ட் <i>ṭ</i> | <i>daṇḍa-</i>                   | > தண்டு <i>taṇṭu</i> , “stick”                              |
| <i>t, th, d, dh</i> | > த் <i>t</i> | <i>dāma-, dhāman-</i>           | > தாமம் <i>tāmam</i> ,<br>“string, site”                    |
| <i>p, ph, b, bh</i> | > ப் <i>p</i> | <i>bali-</i>                    | > பலி <i>pali</i> , “offering”                              |
| <i>ś, s</i>         | > ஶ் <i>c</i> | <i>śiva-</i>                    | > சிவன் <i>civaṅ</i> , “lord Śiva”                          |

|          |                             |  |
|----------|-----------------------------|--|
| ṣ        | > ட̣ ṭ                      | <i>varṣa-</i> > <i>varuṭam</i> , “year”        |
| <i>h</i> | > க் <i>k</i> <sup>14</sup> | <i>varāha-</i> > வராகம் <i>varākam</i> , “hog” |

Prakrit influence is betrayed by the weakening of intervocalic consonants that could be represented in Tamil: *gopāla-* > கோவல் *kōval*, “cowherd”; *bhuja-* > புயம் *puyam*, “arm”; Skt. *kṛṣṇa-* > Pkt. *kaṇha-* > கண்ணன் *kaṇṇan*, “lord Kṛṣṇa”.

Among the vowels, Sanskrit *e* and *o* are represented in Tamil by the long vowels ஏ *ē* and ஒ *ō*, while Skt. vocalic *r* and *ṛ* are not found: *amṛta-* > அமுதம்/அமிர்தம் *amutam/amirtam*, “ambrosia”; *vṛtta-* > விருத்தம் *viruttam*, “circle”.

However, Tamil has one more nasal than Sanskrit, the alveolar ன் *n*, and many Sanskrit intervocalic dental nasal *n* are depicted by a Tamil alveolar: *avani-* > அவனி *avani*, “earth”; *dhana-* > தனம் *taṇam*, “wealth”. Occasionally a Sanskrit *r* is rendered not by Tamil ற் *r* but by ற் *r*: *sthira-* > திறம் *tiram*, “firmness”.

Since Tamil does not begin words with ற் *r* or ல் *l*, corresponding Sanskrit items are prefixed with அ- *a-*, இ- *i-* and உ- *u-*, depending on the surrounding phonemes: *rakṣasa-* > அரக்கன் *arakkan*, “demon”; *rāma-* > இராமன் *irāman*, “Rāma”; *roma-* > உரோமம் *urōmam*, “hair”; *loka-* > உலகம் *ulakam*, “world”; *laṅkā-* > இலங்கை *ilaṅkai*, “Sri Lanka”.

Consonant clusters are simplified along the lines already in practice in the Prakrits, the two most frequent strategies being assimilation and insertion of vowel glides, although especially in the beginning of the word consonants may simply be dropped: *kṣema-* > ஏமம் *ēmam*, “protection”; *jñāna-* > ஞானம் *ñānam*, “knowledge”; *cakra-* > சக்கரம் *cakkaram*, “discus”; *divya-* > திவ்வியம் *tivviyam*,

<sup>14</sup> Initial sibilant or *h-* may be lost in borrowing: *hara-* > அரன் *aran*, “Hara (~Śiva)”.

“divine”, *bhakti*- > பத்தி *patti*, “devotion”; *prabandha*- > பிரபந்தம் *pirapantam*, “composition”.

A rarer choice is metathesis: *agni*- > அங்கி *aṅki*, “fire”.

Many important words can have several forms: *Śrī* > திரு, சிரீ, சீ *tiru, cirī, cī*, “the goddess Śrī”.

Since Tamil has a far more restricted use of genders and since the whole system of nominal inflection is much more straightforward, nominal endings are simplified:

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| -a and consonantal stems | > -am/-u, for m. eventually -an:<br>அரசு/அரசன் <i>aracu/aracaṅ</i> , “king” |
| -ā (f.)                  | > -ai n.: <i>senā</i> > சேனை <i>cēnai</i> , “army”                          |
| -i (m./n./f.), -ī, -in   | > -i (m./n./f.): <i>nadī</i> > நதி <i>nati</i> , “river”                    |
| -u (m./n./f.), -ū        | > -u (n.) <i>madhu</i> - > மது <i>matu</i> , “honey”                        |

One concomittant is the shortening of words, especially if they have many syllables: *parama*- > பரம், பரன் *param, paraṅ*, “the highest, God”

Another frequent strategy besides borrowing are calques, and terminologically important words may have both: *sūtra*- > சூத்திரம் *cūttiram*, “aphorism” and நூல் *nūl*, “text” (literally both *sūtra* and *nūl* mean “thread”); *veda*- > மறை *marai* and வேதம் *vētam*, “Veda”; *karman*- > கருமம் *karumam* and வினை *viṅai*, “(past) deeds”; *artha*- > பொருள் *poruḷ*, “wealth - meaning”.

As is to be expected, many words change meaning, thus creating “false friends” for students moving from Sanskrit to Tamil: *kavi*- “poet” > கவி *kavi* “poem”, *lakṣaṇa*- “what explains” > இலக்கணம் *ilakkaṇam* “grammar” paired with *lakṣya*- “what is to be explained” > இலக்கியம் *ilakkiyam* “poetry”.

Verbs are moving over rather late and are always borrowed into the 11<sup>th</sup> class of strong verbs: *vañj* > *vañci-ttal*, “to deceive”; *cint* > சிந்தித்தல் *cinti-ttal*, “to think”.



## 1.2 Pronouns

personal pronouns

|                              | base form  | oblique   |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> sg.          | யான் <i>yān</i> , later: நான் <i>nān</i>                 | என் <i>eṅ</i>   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> sg.          | நீ <i>nī</i>   | நின் <i>nin</i> , later: உன் <i>uṅ</i>                |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> sg. (m.f.n.) | தான் <i>tān</i>  | தன் <i>tan</i>  |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> pl.          | யாம் <i>yām</i> (exclusive), நாம் <i>nām</i> (inclusive) | எம் <i>em</i> (exclusive), நம் <i>nam</i> (inclusive) |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> pl.          | நீர் <i>nīr</i> , நீயிர் <i>nīyir</i>                    | நும் <i>num</i>                                       |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> pl. (h.+n.)  | தாம் <i>tām</i>  | தம் <i>tam</i>  |

The system of personal pronouns is simple and stable; only the first person singular base form (யான் *yān*, “I”) and the second person singular oblique (நின் *nin*, “your”) are slowly taken over by நான் *nān* and உன் *uṅ*, respectively, from bhakti times onwards, although for many centuries both forms are used side by side.

The third person pronoun தான்/தாம் *tān/tām* functions for all genders and the plural can also be used for the honorific. It is also used as a reflexive pronoun, gradually being weakened down to the modern-day emphatic: அரசன் தான் *aracaṅ tān*, “the king himself” – “the king!”.

The personal pronouns, occasionally in *Kalittokai* and *Paripāṭal* but more visibly in the bhakti corpus, have a tendency to mark the genitive (எனது *eṅatu*, நினது/உனது *ninatu/unatu*, etc.) and even to use a short form (என *eṅa*, நின/உன *nina/uṅa*, etc.) to mark a genitive with a plural object:

Tē 3.4.1.2    உன கழல் தொழுது எழுவேன்  
*uṅa kaḷal toḷutu eḷuvēṅ*

your(pl.) anklet worshipped rise-I  
 “I rise in worship of your anklet[ted feet].”

demonstrative and interrogative pronouns

The demonstrative pronoun knows three degrees of deixis, close to the speaker (இ- *i-*), something like the other side of the table (உ- *u-*), and further off (அ- *a-*), of which the intermediate does not much survive *Caṅkam* times. The corresponding interrogative is எ- *e-*, in some forms ய- *y-*. These stems can simply be used in the adjectival position as proclitic vowels (அம்மரம் *a-m-maram*, “that tree”; இவ்வுலகு *i-vv-ulaku*, “this world”),<sup>15</sup> but there is a corresponding system of full forms:

|           | இ- <i>i-</i>                  | உ- <i>u-</i>     | அ- <i>a-</i>                  | எ-/ய்- <i>e-/y-</i>   |
|-----------|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| m.sg.     | இவன் <i>ivan</i>              | உவன் <i>uvan</i> | அவன் <i>avan</i>              | எவன் <i>evan</i>  |
| f.sg.     | இவள் <i>ival</i>              | உவள் <i>uvāl</i> | அவள் <i>avāl</i>              | எவள் <i>evāl</i>  |
| n.sg.     | இது <i>itu</i>                | உது <i>utu</i>   | அது <i>atu</i>                | எது <i>etu</i> ,<br>யாது <i>yātu</i><br>யாவது<br><i>yāvatu</i> ,<br>எவன் <i>evan</i> ,<br>என் <i>en</i> |
| 3.h./ pl. | இவர்(கள்)<br><i>ivar(kal)</i> | உவர் <i>uvar</i> | அவர்(கள்)<br><i>avar(kal)</i> | யார் <i>yār</i> ,<br>ஆர் <i>ār</i> ,<br>யாவர் <i>yāvar</i>  |
| n.pl.     | இவை <i>ivai</i>               | உவை <i>uvai</i>  | அவை <i>avai</i>               | எவை <i>evai</i>   |

<sup>15</sup> Note that for these forms the sandhi is special in that the glide before a vowel is always *v* and always doubled. The modern adjectival forms அந்த *anta* and இந்த *inta* are found, though rarely at first, from bhakti times onwards.

Forms in *a-* stand in if the third person pronoun needs to specify gender (அவன் *avan*, “that man” or simply “he”). Only the neuters form a separate oblique stem (sg. இதன் *itan*, அதன் *atan*, pl. இவற்று *ivarrru*, அவற்று *avarrru*). In all other cases the base form is identical with the oblique. The indefinite/universal pronoun is formed by adding the enclitic coordinative *-um* to the interrogative pronoun: யாரும் *yārum*, “anybody, everybody”. The same can be done with nouns: நாள் *nāl*, “day” > நாளும் *nālum* “daily”. A post-position with a similar function is தொறு(ம்)/தோறு(ம்) *toru(m)/tōru(m)*, which is to be added to nouns (நாடோறும் *nāl-tōrum*, “every day”),<sup>16</sup> but also to verbal roots: காண்டொறும் *kāṇ-torum*, “whenever seeing”. The short form seems to be chosen in cases where the compound yields a full metrical foot, the long form when the noun to be modified already corresponds to a *cīr*: வைகல் தோறும் *vaikal tōrum*, “every day” (KT 298.3); தொறு *toru* followed by a vowel also changes to தோறு *tōru*.<sup>17</sup>

In order to emulate a Sanskrit relative construction, the *அ-* *a-* stem can be juxtaposed to the *எ-/ஓ-* *e-/y-* stem (*yad – tad ~ யாது yātu – அது atu*).<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Rhetorically the same effect can be achieved by repeating a noun: ஊழியூழி *ūli-y-ūli*, “aeon after aeon”,

KT 130.3f.: நாட்டின் நாட்டின் ஊரின் ஊரின் | குடி முறை குடி முறை தேரின்  
*nāṭṭin nāṭṭin ūriṅ ūriṅ | kuṭi murai kuṭi murai tēriṅ*  
 land<sup>in</sup> land<sup>in</sup> village<sup>in</sup> village<sup>in</sup> | hamlet order hamlet order search-if  
 “If [we] search [him] in land by land, village by village, hamlet by hamlet ...”

<sup>17</sup> An alternative to *toru* with a verbal root is repeated verbal root or abstract noun plus *-உழி -uḷi*: தொடுவுழி தொடுவுழி *toṭuvuḷi toṭuvuḷi*, “whenever it touches” (KT 399.3), but also செலுழி செலுழி *celuḷi celuḷi*, “wherever she goes” (AN 49.15). Note, however, that *-உழி -uḷi* can also be used with an absolutive for a temporal clause (cf. p. 98n).

<sup>18</sup> An early example is found in Poy 44.1 தமர் உகந்தது எவ்வுருவம் அவ்வுருவம் தானே *tamar ukantatu e uruvam a uruvam tāṇē*, “whatever forms delights his people is just the form”, i.e., the forms Viṣṇu manifests himself in.

A number of temporal, spatial and modal adverbs are connected with the three stems (the list is not complete!):

|  |   |
|--|---|
| here/there:                              | இவ/உவ/அவ <i>iva/uva/ava</i><br>இவண்/அவண் <i>ivan/avan</i><br>ஈங்கண்/ஆங்கண் <i>īnkaṅ/ānkaṅ</i><br>ஈண்டை/ஆண்டை <i>īṇṭai/āṇṭai</i> |
| here/there/where?<br>and thus/how?:      | இங்கு/ஈங்கு/உங்கு/அங்கு/ஆங்கு/யாங்கு<br><i>īnku/īnku/uṅku/aṅku/ānku/yānku</i>   |
| where?:                                  | யாண்டு <i>yāṇṭu</i>   |
| in between:                              | ஆயிடை <i>āyiṭai</i>   |
| beyond:                                  | உம்பர் <i>umpar</i>   |
| before:                                  | ஊங்கு <i>ūnku</i>   |
| like this/like that/<br>in which manner: | இங்ஙனம்/அங்ஙனம்/எங்ஙனம்<br><i>inṅṅanam/aṅṅanam/eṅṅanam,</i><br>இங்கனம்/அங்கனம்/எங்கனம்<br><i>īnkaṅnam/aṅkaṅnam/eṅkaṅnam,</i>    |
| what, why:                               | எ(ன்)னை <i>e(n)nai</i>  |
| how much:                                | எனை <i>eṇai</i>   |
| today, that day:                         | இன்று/இன்றை <i>inru/inrai</i> , அன்று/அன்றை<br><i>anru/anrai</i> <sup>19</sup>  |
| when?, always:                           | என்று <i>enru</i> , என்றும் <i>enrum</i>  |
| now:                                     | இனி <i>ini</i>  |
| even now, again:                         | இன்னும் <i>innum</i>  |

In addition to these, there are the pronominal-adjectival stems இ(ன்)னை/அ(ன்)னை *i(n)nai/a(n)nai* which form a full paradigm of

<sup>19</sup> In an attributive position before a noun இன்று *inru* and அன்று *anru* have the rare alternate (adjectival?) forms இன்றை *irrai* and அன்றை *arrai*: அன்றைத் திங்கள் *arrait tiṅkaḷ*, “that day’s moon” (PN 112.1).

persons and numbers expressing that something/someone is like this (*i-*) or like that (*a-*): கூடலனையாள் *kūṭal anaiyāl*, “she who is like Madurai”. The most frequent forms for neuter singular and neuter plural are இற்று/அற்று *irru/arru* and இன்ன/அன்ன *inna/anna*, the latter of which can also be used adverbially (“thus”), and அன்ன *anna* is one of the more frequent particles of comparison (“like”). Moreover the அ(ன்)னை *a(n)nai* stem can merge with a perfective verbal stem to form a *peyareccam* compound:

KT 106.6      தான் மணந்தனையம் என விடுகம் தூதே  
*tān maṇantaṇaiyam ena viṭukam tūṭē*  
 he united-such-we say(inf.) send-we(sub.) message<sup>5</sup>  
 “Let us send a message to say we are [still] like when  
 he united with [us].”

A few more pronominal adjectives exist: பல் *pal*, “many”; சில் *cil*, “few”; பிற *pira*, “other”; மற்று *marru*, “other”; வேறு *vēru*, “other, different”.

### 1.3 Adjectives

Old Tamil has a limited number of “real”, simple adjectives, but a variety of techniques for marking a noun as an adjective. All of them have in common that they cannot be directly looked up in a dictionary, since they are all perceived as noun derivatives (for அரு *aru*, cf. அருமை *arumai*, etc.). The simplest manner is to put another noun in attributive position directly before another noun.

The most frequent Old Tamil adjectives are:

அரு *aru*, “rare, difficult, precious”

கடு *kaṭu*, “fast, fierce, harsh”

சிறு *ciru*, “small, little”

இரு *iru*, “big”, “dark”

பெரு *peru*, “big, great”

குறு *kuru*, “short”

நெடு *netu*, “long”

புது *putu*, “new”

பழ *pala*, “old”

நறு *naru*, “fragrant”

கரு *karu*, “black”

செம் *cem*, “red”

பசு *pacu*, “green”

வெள் *vel*, “white”

இள *ila*, “young”

முது *mutu*, “aged”

தட *taṭa*, “broad, large”

நல் *nal*, “good”

தொல் *tol*, “old”  
 புல் *pul*, “low, mean”, “tawny”  
 மெல் *mel*, “soft, tender”  
 வல் *val*, “strong”  
 இன் *in*, “pleasing”  
 ஒள் *ol*, “bright”  
 தண் *tan*, “cool”  
 திண் *tin*, “firm, solid”  
 தூ *tū*, “pure”  
 தெள் *tel*, “clear”  
 நுண் *nuṇ*, “fine”  
 வள் *val*, “generous, liberal”  
 செம் *cem*, “straight”  
 தீம் *tīm*, “sweet”  
 வெம் *vem*, “hot”  
 பை *pai*, “fresh”  
 மா *mā*, “big”, “dark”  
 வை *vai*, “sharp”

The following seven are the established techniques for adjective formation:

- 1 adj. with consonant stem: நல்லா *nal-l-ā*, “good cow”
- 2 adj. in *-u/-a* + class nasal: அருஞ்சுரம் *aruñ-curam*, “difficult desert”
- 3 verbal root as adj.: உயர்வரை *uyar-varai*, “high mountain”

- 4 noun in attributive position: குண்டுநீர் *kuṇṭu-nīr*,  
“deep water”  
கானமஞ்சை *kāṇa maññai*,  
“forest peacock”
- 5 noun + suffix -அ -*a*: கால...குருகு *kāla...kuruku*,  
“legged ... heron”
- 6 noun + suffix -அம் -*am*<sup>20</sup>: தண்ணந் துறைவன் *taṇṇam*  
*turaivan*, “cool ghat-he” (“a man  
from the cool ghat”  
கள்ளியங் காடு *kaḷḷiyam kāṭu*,  
“spurge forest”
- [7 modern form: பெரிய *periya*, “big”]

A comparative is not expressed by changing the form of the adjective, but the preceding noun takes the comparative suffix -இன் -*in* plus -உம் -*um*: நிலத்தினும் பெரிதே வானினு முயர்ந்தன்று ... அன்பு, *nilattinum peritē, vāninum uyarntanru ... anpu*, “bigger than the earth, higher than the sky (...) is love” (KT 3.1+4). Equal degree in quality is expressed by simple -இன் -*in* without -உம் -*um*: கூந்தலின் நறிய ... பூ *kūntalin nariya ... pū*, “flowers as fragrant as the tresses” (KT 2.4f.).

<sup>20</sup> In traditional grammar -அம் -*am* is taught as an increment (*cāriyai*) with tree names in particular (cf. *Tolkāppiyam Eḷuttatikāram*, 416i).



## 1.4 Adverbs

Old Tamil has six strategies for forming adverbs, in addition to the pronominal adverbs already discussed, and a very small number of “natural” adverbs that are without etymology or cognate forms: நனி *nani*, “much”, தவ *tava*, “very”.

1. Any adjective used in the neuter form, either singular or plural, can stand for an adverb: சிறிது *ciṛitu*, “a little” (KT 14.6), கடிய *kaṭiya*, “loudly” (KT 194.3).

The oblique form is also possible, sometimes even a double oblique: நுண்ணிதின் *nuṇṇitiṅ*, “subtly” (KT 167.6); எளிதனின் *eḷitanin*, “easily” (NA 239.3).

2. In isolated cases we see what looks like the dative of an adjective: நற்கு *narku*, “well”.
3. The enclitic particle -ஏ *-ē* can be added to an adjective to form the adverb: வல்வே *vallē*, “strongly”.
4. The infinitive -என *-ena* of the quotative verb என்னுதல் *eṇṇutal*, “to speak”, is not only employed in the formation of ideophones (see below), but also of adverbs: தண்ணென *taṇṇena*, “coolly”.
5. Infinitives can be used as adverbs. Some of them are frozen and lexicalised as such: மிக *mika*, “much”. But they are also used productively: இறப்ப *irappa*, “exceedingly” (NA 338.4).
6. Absolutes can be used as adverbs, especially when they stand in concatenation with another absolute: விரைஇ *viraii*, “fragrantly” (KT 62.2).

For want of a better place we may add here the small number of nouns that are used as postpositions or adverbs of position:

மேல் *mēl*, “upon”

கீழ் *kīl*, “beneath”

முன் *mun*, “before”

பின் *pin*, “after”

உடன் *uṭan*, “along with”

உள் *ul*, “inside”

எதிர் *etir*, “opposite”

வெளி *veli*, “outside”

புறம் *puram*, “outside”

Note that முன் *mun* and பின் *pin* have a number of alternate forms such as: முன்னர் *munnar*, பின்னர் *pinnar*, பின்றை *pinrai*, etc.

## 1.5 Numerals

cardinal:

|      | adjectival                              | vowel sandhi                         | predicative          |
|------|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1    | ஒரு <i>oru</i>                          | ஓர் <i>ōr</i>                        | ஒன்று <i>onru</i>    |
| 2    | இரு <i>iru</i>                          | ஈர் <i>īr</i>                        | இரண்டு <i>iraṇṭu</i> |
| 3    | மு <i>mu</i>                            | மூ <i>mū</i>                         | மூன்று <i>mūṇru</i>  |
| 4    | நால் <i>nāl</i>                         | நாலு <i>nālu</i>                     | நான்கு <i>nāṅku</i>  |
| 5    | ஐ <i>ai</i>                             | ஐம் <i>aim</i>                       | ஐந்து <i>aintu</i>   |
| 6    | அறு <i>aru</i>                          | ஆற் <i>ār</i>                        |                      |
| 7    | எழு <i>eḷu</i>                          | ஏழ் <i>eḷ</i>                        |                      |
| 8    | எண் <i>eṇ</i>                           | ஏண் <i>eṇ</i>                        | எட்டு <i>eṭṭu</i>    |
| 9    | ஒன்பது <i>onpatu</i>                    |                                      |                      |
| 10   | பது <i>patu</i> /<br>பதின் <i>patin</i> |                                      | பத்து <i>pattu</i>   |
| 11   | பதினொரு<br><i>patinoru</i> , etc.       |                                      |                      |
| 100  | நூறு <i>nūru</i>                        | நூற்று <i>nūrru</i>                  |                      |
| 200  | இருநூறு<br><i>irunūru</i> , etc.        |                                      |                      |
| 900  | தொள்ளாயிரம்<br><i>tollāyiram</i>        | தொள்ளாயிரத்து<br><i>tollāyirattu</i> |                      |
| 1000 | ஆயிரம் <i>āyiram</i>                    | ஆயிரத்து <i>āyirattu</i>             |                      |

ordinal: ஒன்றாம் *onrām*, ஒன்றாவதும் *onrāvatu*

When numbers are put in juxtaposition, the rule of thumb is that bigger numbers followed by smaller number have to be added, and smaller numbers followed by bigger number have to be multiplied:

Pū 41.1 ஏழு மூன்று முடியனைத்தும் *ēlum mūnrum muṭi aṇaittum*, all the seven [plus] three heads” but Poy 35.3f. ஈரைந்து முடியான் *īr aintu muṭiyān*, “he with twice five heads”. Sanskrit numerals are borrowed freely from bhakti times onwards.

The numeral *oru/ōr* has a number of special usages. It may function as an indefinite article (“a”), but also as an attribute (“unique”). Moreover, from bhakti times on the sandhi form *ōr* may be used even if the following word starts with a consonant.

## 1.6 Ideophones

Old Tamil has a very special formation in what has recently been termed ideophones [Chevillard 2004], formerly called onomatopoeia, though only a minority among them are based on sound imitation. They consist of one or more syllables, with often, though not always unclear semantic meaning, combined with the quotative verb என்னுதல் *ennutal*, “to say”, in any of its forms. This means they are not only used as adverbs (abs. -என்று *-enru* or inf. -என *-ena*), although that is by far the most common usage, but also as adjectives (verbal root -என் *-en* or *peyareccam* -என்ற *-enra*) or even as finite verbs. This flexible type of ideophone is not to be confused with poetic refrain words found in bhakti songs and often also with an onomatopoeic elements, such as தாலேலோ *tālēlō* (Periyālvār fourth decade). Some ideophones also take other forms such as குக்கூ *kukkū*, denoting the call of the rooster. Also, exclamations exist, as in any language, and they might be closer to ideophones than to particles, because they usually have an emotive and onomatopoeic value. For lament, for example, there is the old அன்னோ *annō* and the bhakti-time அந்தோ *antō*.

The most common ideophones are:

|                        |                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| அம்மென் <i>ammen</i>   | denoting something overfull  |
| இம்மென் <i>immen</i>   | denoting a humming sound     |
| இழுமென் <i>ilumen</i>  | denoting noise or sweetness  |
| ஒய்யென் <i>oyyen</i>   | expressing urgency           |
| ஒல்லென் <i>ollen</i>   | denoting sound               |
| கதுமென் <i>katumen</i> | denoting quickness           |
| கம்மென் <i>kammen</i>  | denoting silence             |
| கல்லென் <i>kallen</i>  | denoting excitement or noise |

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| கிடினென் <i>kiṭinen</i> | denoting tinkling                                |
| நெரேரென் <i>nerēren</i> | denoting suddenness                              |
| தண்ணென் <i>tannen</i>   | denoting coolness                                |
| தவ்வென் <i>tavven</i>   | denoting heat                                    |
| துட்கென் <i>tuṭken</i>  | denoting alarm                                   |
| துடுமென் <i>tuṭumen</i> | denoting something falling into water            |
| துண்ணென் <i>tunnen</i>  | denoting 1. startling 2. fright<br>3. suddenness |
| நள்ளென் <i>nallen</i>   | denoting silence                                 |
| புல்லென் <i>pullen</i>  | denoting futility/emptiness                      |

## 1.7 Particles

Particles belong to the least understood elements of Old Tamil syntax, where they were one strategy, in coordination with word order, for marking sentence structures, periods, modes, moods, etc. [A detailed discussion can be found in Wilden 2006]. The system is already disintegrating in the younger parts of the *Caṅkam* corpus itself and only partly understood in the grammatical tradition (where a certain amount of confusion prevails between what is semantically empty and what is without function, both called *acai*, “expletive”). For many particles today we have no idea what their function might have been, and some of them do not have a sufficient number of occurrences to venture a sustainable hypothesis. For a few basics, see Chapters 16 and 17 under “Syntax”.

Just for illustrating the numbers, what follows is an (incomplete) list of particles from the *Caṅkam* and bhakti corpus; many of them may also combine into particle clusters such as கொல்லே *kollō*:

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| அம்ம <i>amma</i>   | lament; invitation of attention                  |
| அரோ <i>arō</i>     | ?  |
| ஆ <i>ā</i>         | interrogative (late)                             |
| ஆர் <i>ār</i>      | ?  |
| ஆல் <i>āl</i>      | assertive  |
| இகா <i>ikā</i>     | ?  |
| ஏ <i>ē</i>         | sentence-final; focalising; interrogative (late) |
| ஓ <i>ō</i>         | interrogative                                    |
| கொல் <i>kol</i>    | interrogative                                    |
| கொன் <i>kon</i>    | ?  |
| தில்ல <i>tilla</i> | wish   |
| தெய்ய <i>teyya</i> | admonition                                       |

|                    |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| மற்று <i>marru</i> | adversative; ?      |
| மன் <i>maṇ</i>     | assertive           |
| மன்ற <i>maṇra</i>  | assertive           |
| மாது <i>mātu</i>   | ?                   |
| மாதோ <i>mātō</i>   | rhetorical question |
| மாள் <i>māḷa</i>   | ?                   |
| யாழ் <i>yāḷa</i>   | ?                   |



## NOUN PHRASES

### 2. Nominal Sentences and Pronominalised Nouns

Nominal sentences are very common in Old Tamil. The regular word order is: **S O P**. In addition there are complicated focalisation (emphasis) patterns that are marked by particles. There is no copula, but occasionally emphasis can be expressed with a verb of existence:

- NA 400.6 எவன் பிழைப் புண்டோ *evan pilaipp<sub>u</sub> uṇṭō*  
what mistake it-is<sup>o</sup> “What mistake is there?”
- KT 207.1 செலவரி தாகும் *celav<sub>u</sub> arit<sub>u</sub> ākum*  
going difficult-it become-it. “Going WILL be difficult.”

The simplest form of a nominal sentence is an unmarked juxtaposition of noun to noun:

- KT 35.5 வாடையும் பிரிந்திசினோர்க் கழலே  
*vāṭaiyum pirinticinōrk<sub>u</sub> aḷalē*  
north-wind<sup>um</sup> separated-they(dat.) fire<sup>e</sup>  
“Even the north wind [is] fire to those who are separated.”

[Here the particle *-ē* is not a means of focalisation, but just the sentence ending particle of the classical Ācīriyam metre.]

- Pēy 53.4 வேங்கடமே யாம்விரும்பும் வெற்பு  
*vēṅkaṭamē yām virumpum verpu*  
Vēṅkaṭam<sup>e</sup> we desiring- mountain  
“The mountain we desire is Vēṅkaṭam.”

Here the sentence structure is the same, but the particle *-ē* is used to mark a focalisation, namely the anteposition of the predicate noun.

The second possibility is a minimal mark on a noun with a pronominalised noun employed either as an adjectival predicate noun or as a denominative.

- KT 18.5 உயிர்தவச் சிறிது காமமோ பெரிதே  
*uyir tavaḥ ciritu, kāmamō peritē*  
 life very small-it, desire<sup>o</sup> big-it<sup>e</sup>  
 “Life is very small, desire, ah, it is big.”
- NA 101.5f. துறைநணி யிருந்த பாக்கமு முறைநணி | யினிதுமன்  
*turai naṇi irunta pākkamum urai naṇi | inituman*  
 ghat nearness been- village<sup>um</sup> staying much | pleasant-it<sup>man</sup>  
 “Staying in the village, too, that was near the ghat, was  
 very pleasant indeed.”
- KT 12.4 கவலைத் தென்ப வவர்சென்ற வாரே  
*kavalaitt<sub>u</sub> eṇpa avar cenra arē*  
 crossroad-it they-say he(h.)- gone- way<sup>e</sup>  
 “It has a crossroad, they say, the way he has gone.”
- [The following two examples elucidate the option of choosing between a verbal sentence and one with a pronominalised noun:
- KT 325.4 யாண்டுளன் கொல்லோ where he-is<sup>kollō</sup>  
*yāṇṭ<sub>u</sub> ulaṅ kollō* “Where is he?”
- KT 379.1 இன்றியாண் டையனோ தோழி today where-he<sup>o</sup> friend  
*inru yāṇṭaiyaṇō tōḷi* “Today, where is he,  
 friend?”]

The feature here called pronominalised noun is one of the most intriguing aspects of the early language. They constitute half of the explanation as to why in Tamil the border line between noun and verb is far weaker than, say, in an Indo-European language. In their productive form, which may be called, with the traditional term *kurippuvinaimurru*, or, in English, denominative, they come close to being verbs, while on the other side of the border the distinction between a participial noun and a finite verb is often morphologically unmarked and many strategies for cross-over exist.

The formation of pronominalised nouns of the type that can be lexicalised (already mentioned in the Introduction) is simple and has been well-described in Lehmann 2004. To a noun or adjective, in base or oblique form, a pronominal suffix is added:

**N/adj.(-obl.)-pron.suff.**

|                   |   |   |  |   |  |
|-------------------|---|---|--|---|--|
| noun              | நாடு<br><i>nāṭu</i><br>“land”                 | செல்வம்<br><i>celvam</i><br>“wealth”            | அறம்<br><i>aram</i><br>“duty”              | வண்ணம்<br><i>vaṇṇam</i><br>“colour”               | நெஞ்சம்<br><i>neñcam</i><br>“heart”  |
| stem              | நாடன்<br><i>nāṭan</i><br>“man from<br>a land” | செல்வர்<br><i>celvar</i><br>“wealthy<br>people” | அறவன்<br><i>aravan</i><br>“dutiful<br>man” | வண்ணன்<br><i>vaṇṇan</i><br>“man with<br>a colour” |  |
| oblique<br>stem   | நாட்டன்<br><i>nāṭṭan</i>                      |   |  |   | நெஞ்சத்தன்<br><i>neñcattan</i><br>நெஞ்சத்தான்<br><i>neñcattān</i><br>“man with a<br>heart” |
| oblique<br>suffix | [நாட்டினன்<br><i>nāṭṭinan</i> ]               |   |  | முகம்<br><i>mukam</i><br>“face”                   | முகத்தினள்<br><i>mukattinaḷ</i><br>“woman with<br>a face”                                  |

Normally, the pronominal endings with the vowel ஒ/ஓ *o/ō* are reserved for participial nouns. There are, however, cross-overs, some even lexicalised. The vowel is changed from long *ā* to long *ō* regularly for metrical-euphonic reasons at the poems end (காதலர் *kāṭalar* – காதலோரே *kāṭalōrē*).

The productivity of pronominalised nouns is highest in the early corpus and diminishes gradually until only frozen forms remain. The following tables record a few of the more productive words in their attestations in *Kuruntokai*, *Narriṇai* and *Akanānūru*.

|       | noun                       | adjective   |
|-------|----------------------------|---|
|       | அன்பு <i>anpu</i> , “love” | இளம் <i>ila(m)</i> , “young”  |
| 2.sg. | அன்பினை <i>anpinai</i>     |   |
| 3.m.  | அன்பினன் <i>anpinan</i>    | இளையோன் <i>ilaiyōn</i>  |
| f.sg. |                            | இளையோள் <i>ilaiyōl</i>  |
| 3.h.  | அன்பினர் <i>anpinar</i>    | இளையர் <i>ilaiyar</i> , இளையோர் <i>ilaiyōr</i> ,<br>இளையவர் <i>ilaiyavar</i> (full pronoun) |
| n.pl. | அன்பின <i>anpina</i>       |   |

The defective verb stem உடை *uṭai*, “possess”, whether it be verbal or nominal, is attested for the full paradigm:

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| உடையேன் <i>uṭaiyēn</i>                          | 1.sg.                         |
| உடையை <i>uṭaiyai</i>                            | 2.sg., உடையோய் <i>uṭaiyōy</i> |
| உடையள் <i>uṭaiyal</i>                           | f.sg.                         |
| உடையன் <i>uṭaiyan</i>                           | m.sg.                         |
| உடைத்து <i>uṭaittu</i> , உடையது <i>uṭaiyatu</i> | n.sg.                         |
| உடையம் <i>uṭaiyam</i>                           | 1.pl.                         |
| உடையீர் <i>uṭaiyīr</i>                          | 2.pl.                         |
| உடையர் <i>uṭaiyar</i>                           | 3.h., உடையோர் <i>uṭaiyōr</i>  |
| உடைய <i>uṭaiya</i>                              | n.pl.                         |

The following types of relation are well-attested:

|                            |                               |                            |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| possessive,<br>alienable   | செல்வன் <i>celvan</i>         | “he who is prosperous”     |
| possessive,<br>inalienable | முடியினள்<br><i>muṭiyinaḷ</i> | “she who has a hair knot”  |
| locative                   | நாடன் <i>nāṭan</i>            | “he who is from a country” |
| objective                  | அளியள் <i>aḷiyaḷ</i>          | “she who is to be pitied”  |
| subjective                 | அறவர் <i>aravar</i>           | “they who adhere to duty”  |
| attributive                | பெரியர் <i>periyar</i>        | “they who are big”         |
|                            | முன்னர் <i>munnar</i>         | “they who are before”      |

Note that for a feminine formation the special feminine suffix -இ *-i* is an alternative to the pronominal ending -அள்/-ஆள் *-aḷ/-āḷ*:  
தோளி *tōḷ-i* “she who has a shoulder” (post-*Caṅkam*).

### 3. Attribution

Attribution is a poetic phenomenon that gains supreme syntactical importance in a language that is dependent on word order and that does not originally have relative pronouns. First, we shall focus here on the simple type containing nominal forms (noun, pronominalised noun, participial noun, pronoun, adjective, adverb), but no nonfinite verbal forms. The word order **S O P** is observed here as well, and the point to be taken in is that **attribution is always left-branching**, unless *etukai* (the rhyme pattern; see Chapter 20 under “Venpā”) distorts the order of words.

Attribution may be minimally marked with an oblique:

KT 24.1 கருங்காற் வேம்பி னொண்பு யாணர்  
*karum kāl vēmpin oḷ pū yānar*  
black leg Neem-tree<sup>is</sup> bright flower freshness  
“the freshness of the bright flower of the black-trunked  
Neem tree”

Attribution may be marked with an adjective suffix:

KT 16.5 அங்காற் கள்ளியங் காடு *am kāl kaḷḷiyam kāṭu*  
pretty leg Kaḷḷi<sup>am</sup> forest “a pretty-trunked spurge forest”

Attribution may be marked with a possessive *-uṭai* or *-kelu* + a pronominalised noun:

KT 56.3 வளையுடைக் கையள் *vaḷai-y-uṭaik kaiyaḷ*  
bangle possess- hand-she “she with hands that possess  
bangles”

Attribution can remain completely unmarked, with the consequence that relations may be ambiguous:

KT 286.4 பேரமர் மழைக்கண் கொடிச்சி  
*pēr<sub>a</sub> amar malai kaṇ koṭicci*

big beauty rain eye creeper-she  
 “creeper girl with big beautiful rain eyes”  
 “big, beautiful rain-eyed creeper girl”  
 “creeper girl with eyes [that are like] a big beautiful rain”

Relations may be bracketed and asymmetrical:

KT 15.4f. ஆய்கழல் சேயிலை வெண்வேல் விடலை  
*āy kaḷal | cē ilai veḷ vēl viṭalai*  
 select- anklet | red leaf white spear warrior  
 “warrior with choice anklets [and] a red-tipped white  
 spear”

Relations may be bracketed and symmetrical:

KT 101.4f. பூப்போ லுண்கண் பொன்போன் மேனி  
*pū pōl uṇ kaṇ poṇ pōl mēni*  
*māṇ vari alkul kuru makal*  
 flower similar kohl eye gold similar body  
 fame line hip short woman  
 “small woman with flower-like kohl eyes,  
 a gold-like body [and] hips of glorious outline”

A minimal string is achieved by adding the verbal root to the above-mentioned elements, another peculiarity of Early Old Tamil especially:

KT 2.1 கொங்குதேர் வாழ்க்கை யஞ்சிறைத் தும்பி  
*koṅku tēr vāḷkkai am ciṛai tumpi*  
 pollen search- livelihood pretty wing bee  
 “pretty-winged bee whose livelihood is searching for  
 pollen”

A further typical element is the use of comparisons:

KT 23.2f. மனவுகோப் பன்ன நன்னெடுங் கூந்த | லகவன் மகளே  
*manavu kōpp<sub>u</sub> anna nal neṭum kūntal | akaval makaḷē*  
 chank-bead string like good long tresses | Akaval woman<sup>ē</sup>  
 “sooth-saying woman with good long tresses [white] like  
 chank beads!”

Adverbs may also be integrated:

KT 37.1 நசைபெரி துடையர் *nacai perit<sub>u</sub> uṭaiyar*  
 longing big-it(adv.) “He greatly possesses  
 possess-he(h.) longing.”

Adverbial phrase of place may be head nouns:

KT 138.2f. எம்மி லயல தேழி லும்பர் | ... நொச்சி  
*em il ayalat<sub>u</sub> ēḷil umpar | ... nocci*  
 our- house neighbourhood-it Ēḷil(-hill) beyond | ...  
 Nocci-tree  
 “the Nocci tree ...  
 beyond the Ēḷil hill that is near our house”



#### 4. String Attribution

The phenomenon called string attribution is basically an extension of the attribution already seen, but additionally includes nonfinite verbal forms, beginning with the verbal root, but also both types of *peyareccam*, the verbal noun, the absolutive and the infinitive. In other words, what distinguishes string attribution from subordinate clauses in the Indo-European sense is the fact that syntactically it always ends with a head noun on the right side. Very frequent extensions are subject appositions and comparisons or similes. This form of subordination extends over anything from one line up to thirty or even more – some of the long songs in the *Pattuppāṭṭu* consist of a single sentence.

Absolutive + imperfective *peyareccam* + verbal root:

KT 88.2f. சிறுகட் பெருங்களிறு வயப்புலி தாக்கித்  
தொன்முரண் சோருந் துன்னருஞ் சாரல்  
*ciru kaṇ perum kaḷiru vayam puli tākki*  
*tol muraṇ cōrum tunṇu arum cāral*  
little eye big elephant-bull strength tiger attacked  
old antagony diminishing- approach- difficult slope  
“the slope difficult to approach, where the old antagony  
diminishes after the small-eyed big elephant bull  
attacked the strong tiger”

Comparison + infinitive + perfective *peyareccam*:

KT 35.2-5 சினைபசும் பாம்பின் சூன்முதிர்ப் பன்ன  
கனைத்த கரும்பின் கூம்புபொதி யவிழ  
நுண்ணுறை யழிதுளி தலைஇய  
தண்வரல் வாடை  
*cinai pacum pāmpin cūl mutirppu anna*

*kaṇaitta karumpiṇ kūmpu poti avila*  
*nuṇ urai aḷi tuḷi talaiiya*  
*taṇ varal vātai*

twig green snake<sup>m</sup> egg ripeness like  
 ripened- sugar-cane<sup>m</sup> close- bud open(inf.)  
 fine drip- perish- drop offered-  
 cool coming north wind  
 “the coolly coming north wind  
 that offered finely dripping dispersing drops  
 so that the closed buds on the ripened sugar cane open,  
 like the ripe state of the eggs of the twig-green snake”

Causal absolutive + abs. + abs. + imperfective *peyareccam*:

KT 69.1-5 கருங்கட் டாக்கலை பெரும்பிறி துற்றெனக்

கைம்மை யுய்யாக் காமர் மந்தி

கல்லா வன்பறழ் கிளைமுதற் சேர்த்தி

யோங்குவரை யடுக்கத்துப் பாய்ந்துயிர் செகுக்குஞ்

சார னாட

*karum kaṇ tā kalai perum piri<sub>u</sub> urreṇa*

*kaimmai uyyā kāmar manti*

*kallā val paraḷ kiḷai-mutal cērtti*

*ōṅku varai aṭukkattu pāynt<sub>u</sub> uyir cekukkum*

*cāral nāṭa*

black eye rushing male-monkey big other-it had-because  
 widowhood escape-not desirable female-monkey  
 learn-not strong young-one horde(loc.) united  
 high mountain mountain-side- sprung life destroying-  
 slope land-he(voc.)

“o man from a land of slopes,  
 where the desirable she-monkey that did not escape  
 widowhood,  
 because the black-eyed rushing male monkey had  
 experienced the great other,  
 joined [her] untaught young one to the horde  
 [and] destroyed [her] life by jumping from the side of the  
 high mountain”

Causal absolutive + absolutive + infinitive + comparison +  
 imperfective *peyareccam*:

KT 139.1-5

மனையுறை கோழிக் குறுங்காற் பேடை

வேலி வெருகின மாலை யற்றெனப்

புகுமிட னறியாது தொகுபுடன் குழீஇய

பைதற் பிள்ளைக் கிளைபயிர்ந் தாஅங்

கின்னா திசைக்கு மம்பல்

*maṇai urai kōli kurum kāl pētai*

*vēli veruk<sub>u</sub> inam mālai urreṇa*

*pukum iṭaṇ ariyātu tokup<sub>u</sub> uṭaṇ kuḷīya*

*paital piḷḷai kiḷai payirntāṅku*

*iṅṅāt<sub>u</sub> icaikkum ampal*

house remain- fowl short leg she-bird

hedge wild-cat group evening had-because

entering- place know-not gathered together crowd(inf.)

trouble child relations called-like

unpleasant-it sounding- rumour

“rumours that sound unpleasant

as if the short-legged hen of the fowl living near the house

were calling [her] flock of suffering chicks,  
 assembled, crowding together not knowing a place to enter,  
 because in the evening a group of wild cats turned up at the  
 hedge”

Subject apposition:

KT 285.1-3

வைகல் வைகல் வைகவும் வாரா  
 ரெல்லா வெல்லை யெல்லையுந் தோன்றார்  
 யாண்டுளர் கொல்லோ தோழி  
*vaikal vaikal vaikavum vārār*  
*ellā ellai ellaiyum tōnrār*  
*yāṇṭu ḷar-kollō tōli*  
 day day being-kept(inf.)<sup>um</sup> come-not-he(h.)  
 all daylight edge<sup>um</sup> appear-not-he(h.)  
 where he-is(h.)<sup>kollō</sup> friend  
 “He who did not come [back], since he is kept day by day,  
 and who did not appear on all the borders of daylight  
 (~evenings)  
 where is he, friend?”

Comparison:

KT 160.1-5 நெருப்பி னன்ன செந்தலை யன்றி  
 லிறவி னன்ன கொடுவாய்ப் பெடையொடு  
 தடவி னோங்குசினைக் கட்சியிற் பிரிந்தோர்  
 கையற நரலு நள்ளென் யாமத்து  
*neruppiṅ aṇṇa cem talai aṇṇil*  
*iraviṅ aṇṇa koṭu vāy peṭaiyoṭu*  
*taṭaviṅ oṅku ciṇai kaṭciyiṅ pirintōr*

*kai arā naralum naḷḷen yāmattu*  
 fire<sup>in</sup> like red head Anril(-bird)  
 shrimp<sup>in</sup> like curved mouth female-bird-with  
 tree<sup>in</sup> high twig nest<sup>in</sup> separated-they(h.)  
 action end(inf.) calling- deep(id.)- midnight-  
 “deep midnight,  
 when the Anril bird with a head red like fire  
 in the nest on a high branch of the tree, calls  
 for [its] female with a beak curved like a shrimp  
 so that action ends in those separated”

NA 190.5-7 வண்டுமூசு நெய்த னெல்லிடை மலரு  
 மரியலங் கழனி யார்க்காட் டன்ன  
 காமர் பணைத்தோள்  
*vaṇṭu mūcu neytal nel itai malarum*  
*ariyalam kaḷaṇi ārkkāṭṭu anṇa*  
*kāmar paṇai tō!*  
 bee swarm- blue-water-lily paddy middle blossoming-  
 nectar<sup>am</sup> field Ārkkāṭu(p.n. of a town)- like  
 desirable bamboo shoulder  
 “[she with] desirable bamboo shoulders  
 who is like [the town] Ārkkāṭu with nectary fields  
 where bee-swarmed water-lilies bloom amidst the  
 paddy”

As a conclusion, here is a simile typical of *Caṅkam* literature, one that has earned the poet his name Cempulappeyaṇṇīr:

KT 40.4f. செம்புலப் பெயனீர் போல  
 வன்புடை நெஞ்சந் தாங்கலந் தனவே

*cem pulam peyal nīr pōla*

*aṅp<sub>u</sub> ṽtai neñcam tām kalantaṅavē.*

red soil raining water be-similar

love possess- heart self(pl.) they-mingled(n.pl.)<sup>ē</sup>

“Like red soil [and] pouring water

[our] loving hearts themselves have mingled.”

## 5. Denominative (*kurippuvinaimurru*)

Pronominalised nouns are not only used as a means of enlarging the lexicon, but they can also be employed in the function of predicate nouns – *kurippu-vinai-murru*, “a finite verb by intention”. In this capacity they are very frequent in Early Old Tamil, but the numbers are decreasing towards the end of the millennium. Spontaneous literary forms are found as well as established patterns with many occurrences.

KT 7.1f. வில்லோன் காலன கழலே தொடியோன்

மெல்லடி மேலவுஞ் சிலம்பே

*villōṇ kālana kalalē toṭiyō!*

*mel aṭi mēlavum cilampē*

bow-he leg-they(n.pl.) anklet<sup>ē</sup>. armlet-she

tender foot above-they(n.pl.)<sup>um</sup> tinkling-anklet<sup>ē</sup>.

“Anklets [are on] the feet of him with the bow, and anklets [are] on the tender feet of her with bracelets.”

If lexicalised items are employed in the function of predicate nouns, they may optionally be endowed with a special mark, any slight alteration of their usual form; one of the poetic designations of the poetic hero in the Marutam tract is ஊரன் *ūraṇ*, literally “the man from the village”, and as such entered into the Tamil Lexicon. In KT 97.3 the female speaker wants to make a different sort of point, by stating that the man is currently staying in his village with his own people, i.e., ஊரான் *ūr-āṇ*:

KT 97.3 துறைவன் றம்மு ரானே ghat-he their- village-he<sup>ē</sup>

*turaivaṇ tam ūrāṇē*

“The man from the ghat is in their village.”

- KT 242.1-4 கானங் கோழிக் கவர்குரற் சேவ  
 லொண்பொறி யெருந்தின் றண்சித ருறைப்பப்  
 புதனீர் வாரும் பூநாறு புறவின்  
 சீறா ரோளே மடந்தை  
*kānam kōḷi kavar kural cēval*  
*oḷ porī eruntin taṇ citar uraiṭṭa*  
*putal nīr vārum pū nāru puravin*  
*cīru ūrōḷē maṭantai*  
 forest fowl seize- voice rooster  
 bright spot neck<sup>in</sup> cool drop drip(inf.)  
 shrub water overflowing- flower smell- woodland<sup>in</sup>  
 little village-she<sup>e</sup> girl  
 “[My] girl is in a little village  
 in the flower-scented woodlands, where shrubs over-  
 flow with water  
 so that cool drops drip on the bright-spotted neck  
 of the rooster of the forest fowl with a seizing voice.”
- NA 59.6-8 வன்புலங் காட்டுநாட் டதுவே யன்புகலந்து  
 நம்வயின் புரிந்த கொள்கையொடு நெஞ்சத்  
 துள்ளின னுறைவோ னுரே  
*val pulam kāṭṭu nāṭṭatuvē anpu kalantu*  
*namvayin purinta kolḷkaiyoṭu neñcatt<sub>u</sub>*  
*ullinaḷ uraivōḷ ūrē*  
 hard field wilderness- land-it<sup>e</sup> love mingled  
 us(loc.) desired- principle-with heart-  
 remembered-she remain-she village<sup>e</sup>  
 “It is in the wild lands of hard soil,



the village of her who stayed [back] remembering me,  
[her] heart, mingled with love, with the [sole]  
observance of desiring us.”

These forms are by no means restricted to the third person, but they occur throughout the paradigm:

KT 51.3f. சேர்ப்பனை | யானுங் காதலேன்  
*cērppanai | yānum katalēn*  
coast-he(acc.) | I<sup>um</sup> love-I  
“I too, I love the man from the coast.”

Indeed some noun stems form virtually full paradigms (and have in consequence also been analysed as defective verbs by some scholars); the table for உடை *uṭai* has already been shown on p. 61:

KT 206.5 குறுக லோம்புமி னறிவுடை யீரே  
*kurukal oṃpumiṅ ariv<sub>u</sub> uṭaiyīrē*  
nearing beware(ipt.) knowledge possess-you(pl.)<sup>ē</sup>  
“Beware of coming near, you who possess knowledge.”

NA 183.6-8 வயின்றோ  
றின்னா தலைக்கு மூதையோ டோரு  
நும்மில் புலம்பின் மாலையு முடைத்தே  
*vayin<sub>u</sub>-tōr<sub>u</sub>*  
*innā talaikkum uṭaiyōt<sub>u</sub> oṣum*  
*num il pulampiṅ mālaiyum uṭaittē*  
side-ever  
pleasant-not whipping- cold-wind-with listening-(?)  
your(pl.)- house loneliness<sup>in</sup> evening<sup>um</sup> possess-it<sup>ē</sup>  
“Does your house possess evenings of loneliness too,

when you listen to the unpleasantly whipping cold  
wind?”

Another candidate for an almost complete paradigm is அளி *aḷi*, “pity” or “love”, intriguing for the formulaic systems it is part of and to be treated under formulae in Chapter 19:

KT 30.6      தமிழேன் மன்ற வளியேன் யானே  
*tamiyēn-manra aḷiyēn yānē*  
alone-I<sup>manra</sup> pity-I I<sup>ē</sup>  
“Alone indeed, pitiable am I.”

KT 212.4f.    அளிதோ தானே காமம்  
விளிவது மன்ற நோகோ யானே  
*aḷitō tānē kāmam*  
*vilivatu-manra nōkō yānē*  
pity/love-it<sup>ō</sup> self<sup>ē</sup> desire  
perish-it<sup>manra</sup> I-ache<sup>ō</sup> I<sup>ē</sup>  
“Pitiable it is, desire.  
It will perish for sure. Ah, I ache.”

[An outstanding case is NA 355.10 with the imperative அளிமதி *aḷimati*, “have pity!”, that semantically does not relate to the existing verbal root அளி *aḷi*, “to care”, but to the well-established denominative, that is, a noun plus an imperative suffix.]

## VERBS

The Old Tamil verbal system was clearly based on a dual distinction that is better described as aspectual than as temporal; the basic dichotomy is imperfective – perfective/inchoative [see the discussion for modern Tamil in Deigner 1998]. Since other modes besides the indicative are at best in rudimentary existence, what is hypothetical or irreal has to be expressed along with any type of past, present and future with these two groups of forms. This is one of the reasons why particles were important, although they were later increasingly replaced by adverbs. The two most frequent functions of the perfective aspect are the past tense and what would be called, in Vedic Sanskrit, an aorist: அணிந்தாள் *aṇintāl*, “she was adorned” or “she has put on her ornaments”. The imperfective covers present and future. The present *tense* infiltrates from the bhakti period onwards but takes a long time to become firmly established. Even as late as the 12<sup>th</sup>(?) century conservative texts like, for example, the *Kallātam* make do without it. The present tense very likely developed out of an early auxiliary construction consisting of a verbal root in combination with the verb கில்-தல் *kil-tal*, “to be able to”: யாரோ பிரிகிற்பவரே *yārō pirikirpavarē*, “who are those that will be able to separate?” (KT 22.2), with a regular imperfective of a 10<sup>th</sup>-class verb. In the early Vaiṣṇava *Antāti*-s, then, we find that type of form along with a formation like அறிகின்றேன் *arikiṇṇēn* (Pēy 87.1), which at first sight looks like a corresponding perfective, “I was able to know”, but which in context might well already be understood as “I know”.

Tamil has a simple verbal system that can be represented in twelve classes plus a thirteenth for a moderate number of irregulars.<sup>21</sup> They

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<sup>21</sup> There are two commonly used systems of counting the verb classes, the one of the Tamil Lexicon with twelve classes in Arabic numbers, as well as one in seven classes (+ sub-classes) with Roman numbers going back to Graul 1855. This book follows the division of the Tamil Lexicon as the most important work of reference.

are counted as weak, intermediate and strong, depending on the suffixes they take for forming the perfective and the imperfective aspect. In fact the twelfth class is a mixed class in that it has a “weak” perfective, but a “strong” imperfective. The present tense is almost identical for all of them, with one minor deviation in the last two classes. Note that it took some time before the modern period the present suffix *-கின்ற-* *-kinr-* was weakened into *-கிற்-* *-kir-*. For an overview of the principal forms see the two folding tables (one for the twelve classes and one for the irregulars) at the back of this book, adapted into English from the immensely useful tables found in Beythan 1943.

One further peculiarity of the Tamil verbal system is that it has positive and negative forms for almost all finite forms (indicative, imperative, optative) as well as for some of the nonfinite forms (absolute and *peyareccam*). The latter will be treated along with their positives. For the phenomenon of main verb negation, see Chapter 14.

**The suffixes for the twelve verb classes:**

| root                       | Perfective                  | imperfective                       | (present)                        |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| weak                       |                             |                                    |                                  |
| 1. செய் <i>cey</i>         | <i>cey-t<sub>u</sub></i>    | <i>cey-v-</i>                      | <i>(cey-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>    |
| 2. ஆள், ஆளு <i>āl(u)</i>   | <i>aṅ-t<sub>u</sub></i>     | <i>ālu-v-</i>                      | <i>(ālu-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>    |
| 3. கொல்(லு) <i>kol(lu)</i> | <i>koṅ-r<sub>u</sub></i>    | <i>kollu-v-</i>                    | <i>(kollu-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>  |
| 4. அறி <i>ari</i>          | <i>ari-nt<sub>u</sub></i>   | <i>ari-v-</i>                      | <i>(ari-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>    |
| 5. தூங்கு <i>tūṅku</i>     | <i>tūṅk<sub>u</sub>-iṅ-</i> | <i>tūṅku-v-</i>                    | <i>(tūṅku-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>  |
| 6. விடு <i>viṭu</i>        | <i>viṭ-t<sub>u</sub></i>    | <i>viṭu-v-</i>                     | <i>(viṭu-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>   |
| intermediate               |                             |                                    |                                  |
| 7. உண் <i>uṅ</i>           | <i>uṅ-t<sub>u</sub></i>     | <i>uṅ-p-</i>                       | <i>(uṅ-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>     |
| 8. தின் <i>tin</i>         | <i>tin-r<sub>u</sub></i>    | <i>tin-p-</i>                      | <i>(tin-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>    |
| 9. கேள் <i>kēḷ</i>         | <i>kēṭ-t<sub>u</sub></i>    | <i>kēṭ-p-</i>                      | <i>(kēṭ-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>    |
| 10. கல் <i>kal</i>         | <i>kar-r<sub>u</sub></i>    | <i>kar-p-</i>                      | <i>(kar-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>    |
| strong                     |                             |                                    |                                  |
| 11. தீர் <i>tīr</i>        | <i>tīr-tt<sub>u</sub></i>   | <i>tīr-pp-</i><br><i>(tīr-kk-)</i> | <i>(tīr-k-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i>  |
| 12. நட <i>naṭa</i>         | <i>naṭa-nt<sub>u</sub></i>  | <i>naṭa-pp-</i><br><i>naṭa-kk-</i> | <i>(naṭa-k-kin<sub>r</sub>-)</i> |

In some classes there is a complementary relation (**intransitive – transitive** 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> class: புணர்தல் *puṅarttal*, “to unite” – புணர்த்தல் *puṅarttal*, “to bring together”; **transitive – causative** 6<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> class: விடுதல் *viṭutal*, “to let go”; விடுத்தல் *viṭuttal*, “to cause to let go”) but with the early *Kiḷkkaṅaku* and bhakti corpus also a **causative formation** in analogy to an 11<sup>th</sup> class verb, develops: imperfective/perfective செய்விக்கு-/செய்வித்து- *ceyvikkū-/ceyvittu-*, “to cause to do”.

There is in general a very great fluidity of category between finite and nonfinite forms. In the simple regular formation (type 1 below) the distinction between a participial noun and a finite verb is not marked, although a number of strategies have been developed to disambiguate.

#### formation of participial nouns:

imperfective

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | root- <i>v/p/pp</i> -pron. suff.         | செய்வர் <i>cey-v-ar</i> , “they who do” [or “they do”, finite form] |
| 2 | root- <i>p/pp</i> -pronoun               | அணிபவர் <i>aṇi-p-avar</i> , “they who adorn” <sup>22</sup>          |
| 3 | root-( <i>u</i> ) <i>n</i> -pron. suff.  | சொல்லுநர் <i>col-l-un-ar</i> , “they who speak”                     |
| 4 | root- <i>um</i> -pron.suff./pron. (late) | அறியுமோன் <i>ari-y-um-ōn</i> , “he who knows”                       |

perfective

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | root- <i>nt/t/iy/(in)/tt</i> -pron. suff.                                      | அறிந்தம் <i>arintam</i> , “we who knew”               |
| 2 | root- <i>nt/t/iy/(in)/tt</i> -pronoun (late)                                   | அகன்றவர் <i>akan-r-avar</i> , “they who departed”     |
| 3 | root- <i>nt/nr-icin</i> -pron. suff.<br>(except for the 5 <sup>th</sup> class) | அறிந்திசினோர் <i>ari-nt-icin-ōr</i> , “they who knew” |

Note that for type 3 after -இ *-i* and -ஐ *-ai* palatalisation is possible: அறிஞர் *ariñar*. Note further that, just like the pronominalised nouns, participial nouns, especially of the type 3 imperfective, are frequently lexicalised: செருநர் *cerunar*, “enemies”,

<sup>22</sup> The particularity of this type appears to be that the weak stem in *-v-* is not used; all classes employ *-p-* while the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> double into *-pp-*.

பொருநன் *porunan*, “warrior/dancer”. This formation even spills over to noun stems: வினைஞர் *viñaiñar*, “workers”.

The most frequent basic forms are the first in each aspect, and they are ambiguous forms: வருவன் *varuvan*, “he who comes” or “he comes”. If a poet wants to mark the participial noun, he may either use forms of the types 2 and 3, or he chooses the pronominal ending that employs ஒ/ஓ *o/ō* as a vowel (possible in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person animate singular as well as in 1<sup>st</sup> and honorific plural; see below). Like so many rules for Old Tamil this is a rule of thumb, but it holds good surprisingly frequently.

If, on the contrary, the poet wants to mark a form as a finite verb form, he may choose a suffix *-ku-* for the imperfective (வருகுவள் *varukuval*, “she comes”) or the suffix *-an-* for the perfective (செய்தான் *cey-t<sub>u</sub>-an-an*, “he did”). Frequently of course the finite verb is also marked by the use of particles or simply by position.

[Note that *-an-* rarely also occurs as a suffix with the imperfective, with unclear rhetorical impact: விரைவான் *viraiavanal*, “she is in a hurry” (AN 16.14).]

Additional confusion is brought about by an extraordinary finite form, traditionally called a *murreccam* (“what has a finite verb for its complement”), that occurs within a sentence and which a commentator usually will gloss as an absolutive, to be treated in more detail in Chapter 15a.

The verbal suffixes are almost identical to the pronominal suffixes:

sg.

|                    |  |                          |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>    | -என்/-ஏன், -அன் <i>-eṅ/-ēṅ, -aṅ</i>            |                          |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>    | -இ <i>-i</i> , -ஆய் <i>-āy</i> , -ஐ <i>-ai</i> | -ஓய்/-ஓய் <i>-oy/-ōy</i> |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> m. | -அன்/-ஆன் <i>-aṅ/-āṅ</i> ,                     | -ஓன்/-ஓன் <i>-oṅ/-ōṅ</i> |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> f. | -அள்/-ஆள் <i>-aḷ/-āḷ</i>                       | -ஓள்/-ஓள் <i>-oḷ/-ōḷ</i> |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> n. | -(அ)து <i>-(a)tu</i>                           |                          |

pl.

|                     |   |                          |
|---------------------|---|--------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup>     | -அம்/-ஆம் <i>-am/-ām</i> , -எம்/-ஏம் <i>-em/-ēm</i> | -ஓம்/-ஓம் <i>-om/-ōm</i> |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup>     | -இர்/-ஈர் <i>-ir/-īr</i> , (-மிர் <i>-mīr</i> )     |                          |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> h.  | -அர்/-ஆர் <i>-ar/-ār</i>                            | -ஓர்/-ஓர் <i>-or/-ōr</i> |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> pl. | -கள் <i>-kaḷ</i> , (-மார் <i>-mār</i> )             |                          |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> n.  | -அ/-ஐ <i>-a/-ai</i> , -அவை <i>-avai</i>             |                          |

Note here in particular the potential ambiguity arising from the use of -அன் *-aṅ* for both the first person singular and the third person singular masculine.<sup>23</sup>

Additional forms exist which might be explained as fossils from regional variations or verbal systems that did not make it into the classical literary idiom that was more or less codified by the second half of the first millennium (perhaps when the textual tradition changed from oral to written).

<sup>23</sup> Note further that both neuter singular and neuter plural occasionally have short forms, homophonous to the absolutive in the singular, homophonous to a perfective *peyareccam* in the plural (NA 220.9cf. குறுமகட் | கயலோ ராகலென் றெம்மொடு படலே *kuṟu makaṭku | ayalōr ākal enru emmoṭu paṭalē*, “what happens to us means that he will become the neighbour of the little woman”; NA 5.9 மயங்கிதழ் மழைக்கண் பயந்த தூதே *mayan̄ku itaḷ malai kaṅ payanta tūtē*, “rain eyes with dishevelled lashes have brought forth a message”).



|                |                             |   |
|----------------|-----------------------------|---|
| 1.sg. i.a.     | v.r.-asp. suff.- <i>al</i>  | போல்வல் <i>pōl-v-al</i> , “I resemble”<br>(KT 103.6)    |
|                |                             | செறிப்பல் <i>ceṛi-p-pal</i> , “I tighten”<br>(NA 206.9) |
| [1.pl. p.a.    | v.r.-asp. inf.- <i>ikum</i> | கண்டிகும் <i>kaṇ-ṭ-ikum</i> , “we saw”<br>(NA 20.1)]    |
| 3.pl. i.a.     | v.r.- <i>pa</i>             | என்ப <i>eṇ-pa</i> , “they say” <sup>24</sup>            |
| 3.pl. i.a.     | v.r.- <i>mār</i>            | நோன்மார் <i>nōṇ-mār</i> , “they suffer”<br>(NA 208.6)   |
| 3.sg. (m.f.n.) | v.r.- <i>um</i>             | மல்கும் <i>malḱ<sub>u</sub>-um</i> “it increases”       |

The latter form is the famous habitual future that is formally identical with the imperfective *peyareccam*. The first rule of thumb for distinguishing them is that the *peyareccam* never comes with a particle. Note that the form does not only cover the third person singular in all the three genders, but also at times the neuter plural (examples are discussed at the end of Chapter 6 on the *peyareccam*).

Most grammars of Tamil would include here also the forms in -கு, -கம், -கும், -தும், -தி, -திர -*ku*, -*kam*, -*kum*, -*tum*, -*ti*, -*tir*. In this grammar these forms are understood as another, complementary paradigm and tentatively termed “subjunctive”, discussed in Chapter 10 under “Moods”.

<sup>24</sup> This frequent form for the high-class plural is also used occasionally as an honorific: காணா கழிப *kāṇā kaḷipa* “he (the lover) passes by without seeing [me]” (KT 231.4).

## 6. *Viñaiyeccam*

(Also known as: Absolutive/Co(n)verb/Verbal Participle/Gerund)

The Old Tamil system of nonfinite verbal forms is complex and it serves to express the main forms of subordination. The basic functions and clauses have been described in Zvelebil 1967, the only major contribution to Tamil syntax, but his description was more oriented by the perspective of later pre-modern formal Tamil in that many peculiarities of the older language are not noticed.

Among the forms called *viñaiyeccam* (“that which needs a verb as a complement”) in the grammatical tradition the most frequent and syntactically important form is what has since been variously termed verbal participle, coverb, converb or absolutive. This book follows the latter designation, simply for the obvious similarity this form has with what Sanskrit scholars nowadays refer to as an absolutive.

The basic official rule, in Tamil as in Sanskrit, is that there should be subject identity between the absolutive and the main verb in a sentence. In fact, statistically about 30% of early Tamil absolutives *change* the subject. This fact is silently acknowledged by the commentarial convention of glossing a subject-changing absolutive by an infinitive (செய்து *ceytu* by செய்ய *ceyya*). The rule of thumb accordingly is: first, try to understand the construction as using the same subject; second, if that does not work, accept a change of subject.

Note also that in narrative poetry the absolutive is used, rather than a finite verb, to advance the action when the subject remains identical.

forms of the absolutive:

positive

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. perfective stem                      | செய்து <i>ceytu</i> , “having done” <sup>25</sup>   |
|   | புணர்த்து <i>puṇarttu</i> , “having united”   |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> class                   | அஞ்சி <i>añci</i> , “having feared”   |
|   | [special, metrically lengthened form for 5 <sup>th</sup> class in <i>-uvu</i> : தழுவு <i>taluvu</i> : தழீஇ <i>talī</i> , “having embraced”] |
| 2. verbal root + ( <i>p</i> ) <i>pu</i> | செய்பு <i>ceypu</i> , “having done”   |
|   | உணர்ப்பு <i>uṇarppu</i> , “having perceived”  |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> class                   | அஞ்சுபு <i>añcupu</i> , “having feared”   |
| 3. verbal root + <i>-ā</i>              | செய்யா <i>ceyyā</i> , “having done” (homophonous with the neg. abs.!)   |
| 4. verbal root + <i>-ū(u)</i>           | தேடுஉ <i>tēṭūu</i> , “having sought” (rare)   |
| negative                                |   |
| 5. verbal root + <i>-ā</i>              | செய்யா <i>ceyyā</i> (homophonous with the positive absolutive!)   |
| 6. verbal root + <i>-ātu</i>            | செய்யாது <i>ceyyātu</i>   |
| 7. verbal root + <i>-āmal</i>           | செய்யாமல் (later: from <i>Kalittokai</i> on)  |
| [8. verbal root + <i>-āmai</i>          | செய்யாமை <i>ceyyāmai</i> (homophonous to negative verbal noun; transitional form)]  |

<sup>25</sup> Note that கொள்-தல் *koḷ-tal*, “to take”, abs. கொண்டு *koṇṭu*, has, from bhakti times onwards, கொடு *koṭu* as an alternate form of the absolutive (PeTM 187.2: கஞ்சனைக் கால்கொடு பாய்ந்தாய் *kañcanaik kāl koṭu pāyntāy*, “taking Kañcan by the leg you lept”).

Note that from bhakti times onwards there is a small number of absolutes that may serve as postpositions:

|                               |                                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| நின்று <i>ninru</i>           | “from” <sup>26</sup>               |
| கொண்டு/கொடு <i>koṇṭu/koṭu</i> | “with”                             |
| நோக்கி <i>nōkki</i>           | “thanks to, in consideration of”   |
| பற்றி <i>parri</i>            | “on the basis of, with respect to” |

The classical absolute clause with subject identity looks like this:

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| KT 69.2-4 | மந்தி   கல்லா வன்பறழ் கிளைமுதற் சேர்த்தி<br>யோங்குவரை யடுக்கத்துப் பாய்ந்துயிர் செகுக்கும்<br><i>manti   kallā val paraḷ kiḷai-mutal cērtti</i><br><i>ōṅku varai aṭukkattu pāynt<sub>u</sub> uyir cekukkum</i><br>female-monkey   learn-not strong young-one<br>horde(loc.) united<br>high mountain mountain-side- sprung life destroying-<br>“the female monkey joins [her] untaught young one to<br>the horde,<br>jumps from the side of the high mountain [and thus]<br>destroys [her] life.” |
|-----------|--|

The subject can be left open, a possibility exploited by poets:

|          |                                  |                         |
|----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| KT 4.2,4 | ... கண்ணீர் தாங்கி               | ... <i>kaṇṇīr tāṅki</i> |
|          | ... நோமென் னெஞ்சே                | ... <i>nōm eṇ neñcē</i> |
|          | ... eye-water endured            | “enduring tears         |
|          | ... aches my- heart <sup>ē</sup> | my heart aches.”        |

<sup>26</sup> Even later comes -இலிருந்து *-iliruntu*, “from”, the modern postposition of the ablative.

The relations can be ambiguous, again possibly deliberately:

KT 21.1-4 வண்டுபடத் ததைந்த கொடியிண ரிடையிடுபு

பொன்செய் புனையிழை கட்டிய மகளிர்

கதுப்பின் றோன்றும் புதுப்பூங் கொன்றை | கானம் ...

*vaṇṭu paṭa tatainta koṭi iṇar iṭaiyitupu*

*poṇ cey punai ilai kaṭṭiya makalir*

*katuppin tōṇrum putu pūm konrai | kānam ...*

bee happen(inf.) been-full- creeper cluster between placed  
gold make- adorn- ornament tied- women

hair<sup>in</sup> appearing- new flower Laburnum(-tree) | forest

“forest of laburnum with new flowers that appear like the  
hair of women who have tied in decorative ornaments  
made of gold,

inserting clusters full of creepers full so that bees visit  
[them]”

Debatable and sanctioned by the gramatical tradition are cases where the subject of the absolutive can be understood as a part or possession of the main verb subject:

NA 369.1 சுடர்சினந் தணிந்து குன்றஞ் சேர

*cuṭar ciṇam taṇintu kuṇṇam cēra*

sun anger decreased hill join(inf.)

“when the sun joins the hill, [its] anger decreasing”

There are many obvious cases of change of subject like the following:

KT 88.2f. சிறுகட் பெருங்களிறு வயப்புலி தாக்கித்

தொன்முரண் சோருந் துன்னருஞ் சாரல்

*ciru kaṇ perum kaḷiru vayam puli tākki*

*tol muraṇ cōrum tunṇu arum cāral*  
 little eye big elephant-bull strength tiger attacked  
 old antagony diminishing- approach- difficult slope  
 “slope difficult to approach where the old antagony  
 diminishes  
 after the small-eyed big elephant bull attacked the  
 strong tiger”

The following is an example of poetic multiple subject change:

NA 328.1-3 கிழங்கு கீழ்வீழ்ந்து தேன்மே றூங்கிச்  
 சில்சில வித்திப் பல்பல விளைந்து  
 தினைகிளி கதியும் பெருங்க னாடன்  
*kiḷaṅku kīl vīḷntu tēṇ mēl tūṅki*  
*cil cila vittī pal pala viḷaintu*  
*tiṇai kiḷi katiyum perum kal nāṭaṇ*  
 bulbous-root below descended honey above hung  
 few few(n.pl.) sown many many(n.pl.) ripened  
 millet parrot chasing-away- big stone land-he  
 “man from a land of big stones, where  
 bulbous roots descend beneath, honey hangs above,  
 they sow but a few [and] many many ripen,  
 they chase the parakeets from the millet”

The following quotation contains, along with a rare example of the absolute in -ஊ(உ) -ū(u), also both the செய்யா *ceyyā* and செய்யாது *ceyyātu* types for the negative absolute:

AN 113.9f. நல்காது துறந்த காதல ரென்றுங்  
 கால்பொருஉ மெலியாப் பாடின்  
*nalkātu turanta kātalar eṇrum*

*kāl porūu meliyā pāṭin*

grant-not abandoned lover(h.) always

time beaten become-soft-not sing-if

“if [we] sing without softening, [and] always beating  
the time,

the lover who has abandoned us without granting [his  
presence]”

செய்யா *ceyyā* type for the positive absolute:

KT 341.1-3 பல்வீ பட்ட பசுநனை குரவம்

பொரிப்பூம் புன்கொடு பொழிலணிக் கொளாஅச்

சினையினி தாகிய காலையும்

*pal vī paṭṭa pacu naṇai kuravam*

*pori pūm puṅkoṭu polil aṇi koḷāa*

*cinai init<sub>u</sub> ākiya kālaiyum*

many blossom happened- green bud bottle-flower-tree

be-parched- flower Puṅku-tree-with grove adornment

take

twig pleasant-it become(p.)- time<sup>um</sup>

“Even at a time when the twigs have become pleasing,

after the grove has taken for decoration the bottle-

flower tree

with green buds that fall as many blossoms, along with

the Puṅku tree with flowers [looking like] parched rice”

செய்யாமல் *ceyyāmal* type for the negative absolute (late):

Kali 1.3 கூறாமற் குறித்ததன்மேற் செல்லுங் கடுங்கூளி

*kūrāmal kuṛittataṇ mēl cellum kaṭum kūḷi*

tell-not intended-it- upon going- fierce demon

“the fierce demons who go according to what is intended [by you] without [your] telling”

Occasionally the negative verbal noun in -ஆமை *-āmai* can stand in for a negative absolutive:

Kali 2.16ff. கல்லிறந்து செயல்குழந்த பொருள்பொரு ளாகுமோ

தொல்லியல் வழாஅமைத் துணையெனப் புணர்ந்தவள்

புல்லாகம் பிரியாமை பொருளாயி னல்லதை

*kal irantu ceyal cūḷnta poruḷ poruḷ ākumō*

*tol iyal vaḷāamai tunai eṇa puṇarntavaḷ*

*pul ākam piriyāmai poruḷ āyiṇ allatai*

stone traversed going considered- wealth wealth it-is<sup>o</sup>

old conduct deviate-not companion say(inf.) united-she

empty chest not-separating wealth if except

“will the wealth that considers going, traversing rocks,  
be wealth

unless it is the wealth of not separating from the empty  
breast

of her who is united [with you] as a consort without  
deviating from ancient conduct?”

One more special function is fulfilled by the absolutive in comparative clauses (probably to be analysed as a compound form), where it allows, beyond a simple comparison from noun to noun, a comparison of processes. Two subtypes of this are found, namely absolutive plus ஆங்கு *āṅku* and absolutive plus அன்ன *anna*.

The ஆங்கு *āṅku* type demands an absolutive connection and quite naturally implies a change of subject:

KT 18.4f. சிறுகோட்டுப் பெரும்பழந் தூங்கியாங்கிவ

ளுயிர்தவச் சிறிது காமமோ பெரிதே.



*cīru kōṭṭu perum palam tūṅkiyāṅk<sub>u</sub> ival*  
*uyir tava cīritu kāmamō peritē.*  
 small twig big fruit hung-like she-  
 life very small-it desire<sup>o</sup> big-it<sup>e</sup>  
 “Like a big fruit hanging on a small twig,  
 her life is very small, [her] desire, ah, it is big.”

The அன்ன *anna* type generally, though not always, corresponds to a *peyareccam* connection, as such justifying the question whether the analysis as absolute plus அன்ன *anna* actually is correct, or whether it does not rather fall under the type of *peyareccam* form with irregular sandhi that is mentioned above on p. 46:

KT 386.5 நிலம்பரந் தன்ன புன்கணொடு  
*nilam parantanna punkaṇoṭu*  
 ground spread-like sorrow  
 “sorrow that is as if spread on the ground”

A special type of absolute forms a causal clause formed by adding the quotative என *ena*:

KT 42.2f. கருவி மாமழை வீழ்ந்தென வருவி  
 விடரகத் தியம்பும்  
*karuvi mā maḷai vīḷntēṇa aruvi*  
*viṭar akatt<sub>u</sub> iyampum*  
 amount big rain fallen-because waterfall  
 cave inside- sounding-  
 “the waterfall resounds inside the cave  
 because rain large in amount has fallen.”

Another less frequent combination is a temporal clause of absolute plus -உடன் -*uṭan* in the sense of “as soon as”:

NA 63.3f.

புன்னை

விழவுநாறும் விளங்கிணர் விரிந்துடன் கமழும்

*punnai*

*viḷavu nārum viḷaṅk<sub>u</sub> iṅar virintuṭan kaṁalum*

mast-wood

festival smelling- shine- cluster expanded-together  
being-fragrant-

“where shining clusters of mast-wood, smelling of  
festival, are fragrant as soon as they expand”

## 7. Infinitive (Different Types = Modalities)

There are a number of forms that mostly go by the designation of “infinitive”. Here the rule of thumb is the opposite to that for the absolutive: expect a *change* of subject,<sup>27</sup> although very occasionally the same subject can be found. The obvious exception is an auxiliary construction based on infinitive plus auxiliary (such as the passive with படுதல் *paṭutal*). The most frequent type and the only one to survive up to modern Tamil is the infinitive in -அ *-a*. Its primary functions are subordinate clauses that are resultative (“so that”) or simultaneous (“when, while”), but occasionally causal (“as, since”) or final (“in order to”), rarely conditional (“if”). In narrative poetry this form is used, rather than a finite verb, to advance the action when the subject changes.

forms of the infinitive

1. -அ *-a* added to the root in classes 1-8, to the imperative stem classes 9-12:  
செய்ய *ceyya*, “to do”  
நிற்ப *nirpa*, “to stand” (later நிற்க *nirka*)  
தீர்ப்ப *tīrppa*, “to end” (later தீர்க்க *tīrkka*)
2. -மார் *-mār* தருமார் *tarumār*, “in order to give” (less frequent)
3. -இய *-iya* காணிய *kāṇiya*, “in order to see”  
(often with *aḷapeṭai*<sup>28</sup>) உணீஇய *uṇīiya*, “in order to eat”
4. -இயர் *-iyar* கடியர் *kaṭiyar*, “in order to chase”  
(often with *aḷapeṭai*) கொடஇயர் *koṭīyar*, “in order to give”

<sup>27</sup> For this reason Jean-Luc Chevillard for one (for personal communication) insists on calling the *ceyya* type infinitive an absolutive.

<sup>28</sup> I.e., the metrically lengthened form explained in Chapter 20.

5. -வான் *-vān*, அளப்பான் *aḷappān*, “in order to measure”  
 -(ப)பான் *-(p)pān* (less frequent; rarely found in the old texts)

Type 2 seems to cover more or less the same function as type 1, but is much less common, while the types 3-5 seem predominantly to appear in final function (“in order to”). Final infinitives need not involve a change of subject. Note that type 3 (-இய *-iya*) and type 4 (-இயர் *-iyar*) are homophonous with the optative, type 3 as well as to the perfective *peyareccam* of the 5<sup>th</sup> class. Type 5 (-வான்/-(ப)பான் *-vān/-(p)pān*) is homophonous with the imperfective masculine singular.

A number of verbs take an infinitive:

- KT 114.3 செலவியங் கொண்மோ  
*cela viyam koṇmō*  
 go(inf.) order take(ipt.)  
 “take the order to go!”

**-அ -a**

The normal resultative function is “so that”

- KT 65.1-3 வன்பரற் றெள்ளறல் பருகிய விரலைதன்  
 னின்புறு துணையொடு மறுவந் துகளத்  
 தான்வந் தன்றே தளிதரு தண்கார்  
*val paral teḷ aṛal parukiya iralai taṅ*  
*inṇ<sub>u</sub> uru tuṅaiyoṭu maṛuvant<sub>u</sub> ukaḷa*  
*tāṅ vantaṅrē taḷi taru taṅ kār*  
 hard pebble become-clear- water drunk- Iralai[-deer] own-  
 joy have- companion-with mixed-up jump(inf.)  
 self it-came<sup>e</sup> drip- give- cool rainy-season

“It has come, the dripping cool rainy season,  
so that the Iralai deer that drank clear water between  
hard pebbles leaps in union with its joyful mate.”

The normal temporal function: “while/as”

KT 195.1-3 சுடர்சினந் தணிந்து குன்றஞ் சேரப்  
படர்சுமந் தெழுதரு பையுண் மாலை  
யாண்டுளர் கொல்லோ  
*cuṭar ciṇam taṇintu kuṇṇam cēra*  
*paṭar cumant<sub>u</sub> elutaru paiyuḷ mālai*  
*yāṇṭ<sub>u</sub> uḷar-kollō*

sun anger decreased hill join(inf.)  
affliction laden rise- give- sorrow evening  
where he-is(h.)<sup>kollō</sup>

“Where is he,  
in sorrowful evening that rises laden with affliction,  
while the sun joins the hills, [its] anger decreasing?”

One special function is indirect speech: “that”

KT 24.5f. ... கொடியோர் நாவே  
காதல ரகலக் கல்லென் றவ்வே  
... *koṭiyōr nāvē*  
*kāṭalar akala kallenṛavē*  
... cruel-they tongue<sup>ē</sup>  
lover(h.) depart(inf.) ‘kal’-they-said(n.pl.)<sup>ē</sup>  
“The tongues of cruel people  
foretold that [my] lover would depart.”

One rarer function is temporal bordering on conditional “when/if”. Note that Old Tamil does not have a clear-cut distinction between temporal and conditional; even actual conditional forms may express simultaneity.

KT 127.4f. ஒருநின் பாணன் பொய்ய னாக  
 வுள்ள பாண ரெல்லாம்  
*oru niṅ pāṇan poyyaṅ āka*  
*uḷḷa pāṇar ellām*  
 one your- bard liar become(inf.)  
 be(pey.) bard(h.) all  
 “If your one bard is a liar,  
 all bards that exist [are].”

Also causal function is attested: “since”

KT 212.1-3 கொண்க னூர்ந்த கொடுஞ்சி நெடுந்தேர்  
 தெண்கட லடைகரைத் தெளிமணி யொலிப்பக்  
 காண வந்து  
*koṇkaṅ ūrnta koṭuñci neṭum tēr*  
*teḷ kaṭal aṭai karai teḷi maṇi olippa*  
*kāṇa vantu*  
 man-from-the-sea(?) mounted- handle long chariot  
 clear sea settle- shore clear bell sound(inf.)  
 see(inf.) come  
 “since clear bells are sounding on the set shore of the  
 clear sea, come to see the chariot long with a pole(?)  
 mounted by the man from the sea”

-மார் -*mār*:

KT 155.5f. மாலை நனிவிருந் தயர்மார்  
 தேர்வரும்  
*mālai naṇi virunt<sub>u</sub> ayarmār*  
*tēr varum*  
 evening abundant feast be-engaged-in(inf.)  
 chariot coming-  
 “the chariot is coming  
 so that [she] will be preparing an ample feast for the  
 evening”

The following three are examples of infinitive 3-5 in final function:  
 “in order to”

-இய -*iya*:

KT 269.4-6 யாயு  
 முப்பை மாறி வெண்ணெற் றரீஇய  
 வுப்புவிளை கழனிச் சென்றனள்  
*yāyū*  
*uppai māri veḷ nel tarīya*  
*uppu viḷai kaḷani cenṛanaḷ*  
 mother<sup>um</sup>  
 salt(acc.) exchanged white paddy give(inf.)  
 salt ripen- field she-went  
 “Mother  
 has gone to the field where salt ripens  
 in order to bring white paddy in exchange for salt.”

-இயர் -*iyar*:

KT 141.1f. வளைவாய்ச் சிறுகிளி விளைதினைக் கடிஇயர் | செல்க

*vaḷai vāy ciru kiḷi viḷai tiṇai kaṭṭiyar | celka*  
 curve- mouth little parakeet ripen- millet chase(inf.)  
 may-go(opt.)  
 “You may go in order to chase away parakeets with  
 curved beaks from the ripening millet.”

-வான் -vāṇ/(ப)பான் -(p)pāṇ:

Pari 7.57 அவளைக் கைப்பிணை நீக்குவான் பாய்வாள்  
*avaḷai kai piṇai nīkkuvāṇ pāyvāḷ*  
 she(acc.) hand tie remove(inf.) she-jumps  
 “she jumps in order to remove the tie of [his] hand on her”

Finally here comes one of the rarer examples for the temporal infinitive not changing the subject:

KT 285.1-3 வைகல் வைகல் வைகவும் வாரா

ரெல்லா வெல்லை யெல்லையுந் தோன்றார்

யாண்டுளர் கொல்லோ தோழி

*vaikal vaikal vaikavum vārār*

*ellā ellai ellaiyum tōṇrār*

*yāṇṭ<sub>u</sub> uḷar-kollō tōḷi*

day day being-kept(inf.)<sup>um</sup> come-not-he(h.)

all daylight edge<sup>um</sup> appear-not-he(h.)

where he-is(h.)<sup>kollō</sup> friend

“He who does not come as he is kept back day after day,

he who does not appear at all the borders of daylight

(~evenings),

where is he, friend?”



## 8. *Peyareccam* – Habitual Future/Temporal Clauses

What is called *peyareccam* (“that which needs a noun as a complement”) in the Tamil grammatical tradition is sometimes referred to as an adjectival participle, relative participle (etc.), but since it is another indeclinable with no counterpart in any Indo-European tradition it is best to stick to the Tamil word. It is the feature developed in Tamil to deal with relative construction. It establishes a connection between the verbal action and the head noun, and this relation may be any type of subject, object or modal relation. Peculiar in Early Old Tamil is the possible range of its influence. It frequently is merely attributive or governs one further noun besides its head noun, but it may also govern clauses, sometimes of considerable length. It appears that the distribution of “power”, so to speak, is uneven. While the perfective *peyareccam* is merely attributive or governs short clauses, the imperfective *peyareccam* may in addition govern long clauses. In early Akam poetry that capacity is linked to the poetic feature of the *uḷḷurai*, “inset”, a coded message hidden in such a clause of landscape description (cf. Wilden 2006: 293-307). As a later development, the present tense *peyareccam* does not differ from the other two and has a restricted scope just as the perfective one.

There are a number of formalised *peyareccam* + noun formations with the purpose of forming temporal and modal clauses:

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| temporal | -ஞான்று <i>-ñānru</i> , -கால் <i>-kāl</i> , “time”; -இடை <i>-iṭai</i> , “between”; -இடத்து <i>-iṭattu</i> , obl. of இடம் <i>iṭam</i> , “place”; -முன் <i>-mun</i> , “before”; -பின் <i>-pin</i> , “after” <sup>29</sup> |
| modal    | -ஆறு <i>-āru</i> , “way”; -படி <i>-paṭi</i> , -வகை <i>-vakai</i> , -வண்ணம் <i>-vaṇṇam</i> , “manner”  |

<sup>29</sup> The only postposition that forms a temporal clause with an absolutive, not with a *peyareccam*, is -உழி *-uḷi*, a construction not yet found in the *Caṅkam* corpus: Cilap 11.14 இளமரக் கானத் திருக்கை புக்குழி *iḷa marak kānatt<sub>u</sub> irukkai pukk<sub>u</sub>-uḷi*, “when they entered the seat in the forest with young trees”.

The formation of the *peyareccam*:

|   |                           |   |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| perfective <i>pey.</i><br>5 <sup>th</sup> class | past stem + <i>a</i>      | செய்த <i>cey-t-a</i> , “that did”<br>அஞ்சிய <i>añc-i-y-a</i> ,<br>(அஞ்சின <i>añc-i-ñ-a</i> ) “that<br>feared”<br>உணர்த்த <i>uñar-tt-a</i> , “that<br>informed”          |
| imperfective <i>pey.</i>                        | imperf. stem + <i>-um</i> | செய்யும் <i>cey-y-um</i> , “that<br>does/will do”<br>அஞ்சும் <i>añc-um</i> , “that<br>fears/will fear”<br>உணர்க்கும் <i>uñar-kk-um</i> ,<br>“that informs, will inform” |
| [present <i>pey.</i>                            | root + <i>-kinra</i>      | செய்கின்ற <i>cey-kinra</i> , “that<br>does”]  |
| negative <i>pey.</i>                            | root + <i>-ā</i>          | செய்யா <i>ceyyā</i> , “that does<br>not”  |
| negative <i>pey.</i>                            | root + <i>-āta</i>        | செய்யாத <i>ceyyāta</i> , “that<br>does not”   |

## p.a. attributive:

|         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| KT 77.3 | உழந்த வம்பலர்<br>died- traveller(h.)                  | <i>uḷanta vampalar</i><br>“dead travellers”   |
| KT 35.3 | கனைத்த கரும்பின்<br>ripened- sugar-cane <sup>11</sup> | <i>kaṇaitta karumpiṇ</i><br>“ripe sugar cane” |

## p.a. in minor clauses:

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| KT 86.1 | சிறைபனி யுடைந்த சேவரி மழைக்கண்<br><i>cirai paṇi uṭainta cē ari maḷai kaṇ</i><br>check- dew broken- red streak rain eye |
|---------|--|

“red-streaked rain eyes from which the checked tears  
broke forth”

KT 79.1f. கான யானை தோனயந் துண்ட

பொரிதா னோமை வளிபொரு நெடுஞ்சினை

*kānam yānai tōl nayant<sub>u</sub> uṇṭa*

*pori tāl ōmai vaḷi poru neṭum ciṇai*

forest elephant skin longed- eaten-

be-parched- foot toothbrush-tree wind beat- long branch

“wind-beaten long branch of the toothbrush tree with a  
parched trunk

from which the forest elephant had eaten, desiring the  
bark”

KT 348.2f. புலந்தேர் யானைக் கோட்டிடை யொழிந்த

சிறுவீ முல்லைக் கொம்பின்

*pulam tēr yānai kōṭṭ<sub>u</sub> itai oḷinta*

*ciru vī mullai kompiṇ*

field search- elephant horn(obl.) middle stayed-behind-

little blossom jasmine twig<sup>in</sup>

“like a jasmine twig with little blossoms

that had stayed behind between the tusks of an elephant  
searching the field”

adverbial clauses of time with *pey. p.a.* (i.a. also possible):

KT 25.5 குருகு முண்டுதான் மணந்த ஞான்றே

*kurukum uṇṭu tān maṇanta ṅāṇṇē*

heron<sup>um</sup> it-is he united-time<sup>ē</sup>

“the heron was there at the time he united [with me].”

adverbial clauses for anterior time (“before”) with **negative** *peyareccam*:

KT 352.5f. சிறுபுன் மாலை யுண்மை  
யறிவேன் நோழியவர்க் காணா வுங்கே  
*cīru pul mālai uṇmai*  
*arivēn tōli avar kāṇā-v-ūṅkē*  
little empty evening existence  
know-I friend he(h.) see-not-before<sup>e</sup>  
“Before I see him I shall know, friend,  
of the existence of small empty evenings.”

adverbial clauses of manner with *pey. p.a.* (i.a. also possible; late):

AiAi 26.1+4 பெருநகை யாகின்றே ... இடருற்ற வாறு  
*peru nakai ākinrē ... iṭar urravāru*  
big laughter it-became<sup>e</sup> ... affliction experienced-way  
“It became big laughter, ... the way [he] experienced  
affliction.”

i.a. attributive:

KT 58.1 இடிக்குங் கேளிர்                    *iṭikkum kēḷir*  
admonishing- friends                    “admonishing friends”

i.a. minor clause:

KT 143.2 பழியு மஞ்சம் பயமலை நாடன்  
*paḷiyum aṅcum payam malai nāṭan*  
blame<sup>um</sup> fearing- yield mountain land-he  
“the man from the land of fertile mountains who also  
fears blame”

i.a. relative clause:

KT 25.3-5 தினைத்தா ளன்ன சிறுபசுங் கால  
 வொழுகுநீ ராரல் பார்க்குங் | குருகு  
*tinai tāl anna ciru pacum kāla*  
*oluku nīr āral pārkkum | kuruku*  
 millet foot like small green legged  
 flow- water Āral(-fish) looking-out- | heron  
 “heron, with legs a little green like millet stalks,  
 who looks out for Āral fish in the flowing water”

i.a. adverbial clause of place:

KT 38.1-3 கான மஞ்ஞை யறையீன் முட்டை  
 வெயிலாடு முசுவின் குருளை யுருட்டுங்  
 குன்ற நாடன்  
*kānam maññai arai īṇ muṭṭai*  
*veyil āṭu mucuvīṇ kurulai uruṭṭum*  
*kunram nāṭan*  
 forest peacock rock bring-forth egg  
 sunlight play- langur<sup>in</sup> young-one rolling- hill land-he  
 “man from a land of hills,  
 where the young one of the langur playing in the  
 sunlight  
 rolls the egg laid on the rock by a forest peacock”

i.a. ambiguous relations:

KT 8.1f. கழனி மாத்து விளைந்துகு தீம்பழம்  
 பழன வாளை கதூஉ மூரன்  
*kaḷani māttu viḷaintu ku tīmpaḷam*

*paḷaṇam vāḷai katūum ūraṇ*

paddy-field mango-tree(obl.) ripened shed- sweet fruit

pond Vāḷai(-fish) seizing- village-he

“man from a village where the Vāḷai fish in the pond seizes  
the sweet fruit dropped ripe from the mango tree by the  
paddy field”

i.a. adverbial clause of time:

KT 141.3-7

கொல்லை

நெடுங்கை வன்மான் கடும்பகை யுழந்த  
குறுங்கை யிரும்புலிக் கோள்வ லேற்றை  
பைங்கண் சென்னாய் படுபதம் பார்க்கு  
மாரிரு ணடுநாள் வருதி

*kollai*

*neṭum kai val mān kaṭum pakai ulanta*

*kurum kai irum puli kōḷ val ērrai*

*paim kaṇ cem-nāy paṭu patam pārkkum*

*ār iruḷ naṭu-nāḷ varuti*

clearing

long hand strong stag fierce enmity borne-

short hand dark tiger taking strong male

green eye red dog happen- carcass looking-

difficult darkness middle-day you-come(sub.)

“You would come at midnight in difficult darkness,

when the green-eyed red dog looks out for the fallen carcass

of the male, strong in taking, of the short-handed dark tiger

that had borne the fierce enmity of the long-handed strong

male (~ elephant)”

*tōnrum* comparison clause:

KT 47.1f. கருங்கால் வேங்கை வீயுகு துறுக  
 லிரும்புலிக் குருளையின் றோன்றுங் காட்டிடை  
*karum kāl vēṅkai vī uku turu kal*  
*irum puli kurulaiyīn tōnrum kāṭṭu itai*  
 black leg Vēṅkai blossom shed- thick stone  
 dark/big tiger young<sup>in</sup> appearing- wilderness middle  
 “in the middle of the wilderness,  
 where the thick stone on which the blossom of the  
 black-trunked kino tree had fallen,  
 appears like the cub of the big tiger”

Since the habitual future in *-um* and the imperfective *peyareccam* in *-um* are homophonous and thus only distinguishable by syntax, the following examples are added to illustrate the practical problem. Possible indications that allow to distinguish one from the other would be found in the wider contexts of the source poems. In poetry at times, to be sure, both are possible. Again, note that the habitual future covers all 3<sup>rd</sup> persons singular (m./f./n.) as well as the neuter plural.

m.sg.

KT 8.2+6 ஊரன் ... | மேவன செய்யுந்தன் புதல்வன் றாய்க்கே  
*ūran ... | mēvana ceyyum tan putalvan tāykkē*  
 village-he ... | wish-they(n.pl.) he-does self- son  
 mother(dat.)<sup>ē</sup>  
 “The man from the village does what is wished for by  
 the mother of his son.”

f.sg.

KT 45.4      மறுவருஞ் சிறுவன் றாயே  
*maruvarum ciruvaṅ tāyē*  
 is-upset little-he mother<sup>ē</sup>  
 “The mother of the little one is upset.”

n.pl.

KT 193.6      இன்று முல்லை முகைநா றும்மே  
*iṅru mullai mukai nārumē*  
 today jasmine bud they-are-fragrant<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Today the jasmine buds are fragrant.”

n.sg. (or pey.)

KT 4.1      நோமென் னெஞ்சே நோமென் னெஞ்சே  
*nōm eṅ neñcē nōm eṅ neñcē*  
 it-aches my heart<sup>ē</sup> it-aches my heart<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Ah, my heart aches, my heart aches.”

KT 6.3f.      நனந்தலை யுலகமுந் துஞ்சு  
 மோர்யான் மன்ற துஞ்சா தேனே  
*naṅnam talai ulakamum tuñcum*  
*ōr yān-manra tuñcātēnē*  
 wide place world<sup>um</sup> sleeping-  
 one I<sup>manra</sup> sleep-not-I<sup>ē</sup>  
 “The whole world of vast area is sleeping.  
 I alone am the one who does not sleep.”  
 or “When the whole world of vast area is sleeping,  
 I alone am the one who does not sleep.”



## 9a. Verbal Root for *Peyareccam* (Absolute, Infinitive, Verbal Noun)

The ubiquitous and extremely variable use of the verbal root is one of the most intriguing features of Early Old Tamil. Employed in attribution, compounds and auxiliaries, the verbal root can moreover stand in for any nonfinite verbal form in any type of subordination. The simplest most common usage is attributive, that is, a verbal root stands in for an adjective. This is called *vinaittokai*, “verbal compound” in the grammatical tradition. According to Tamil grammarians, the most frequent function of a verbal root is that of a *peyareccam*, often with a discernible temporal/aspectual impact. As such it can also be clause-governing, but mostly not over more than three elements (N<sup>1</sup>-v.r.-N<sup>2</sup>). In an important article Chevillard puts forth the thesis of complementarity between marked and unmarked syntax, venturing to say that the scope of the verbal root does not exceed a single line of verse [Chevillard 2007a]. More intriguing is the fact that it may also correspond to the other nonfinite forms, namely absolute, infinitive and verbal noun [Wilden 2016]. Moreover it is used with some auxiliaries such as *taru-tal* or *kil-tal* (வரை இழதரும் அருவி *varai ili-tarum aruvi*, “a waterfall that tumbles from the mountain”), and finally also with the indefinite தொறும் *torum*: ஓதல் மல்குதொறும் *otal malku-torum*, “whenever the flood increases” (KT 9.5).

attributive without aspectual impact: ஓங்குமலை *ōṅku malai*, “high mountain”

attributive for *pey*. p.a.: AN 1.4 அறுகோடு *aru kōṭu*, “broken tusk”

attributive for *pey*. i.a.: KT 299.4 புணர்குறி *puṇar kuri*, “sign for uniting”

minimal clause for *pey*. p.a.:

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| KT 79.2  | வளிபொரு நெடுஞ்சினை<br>wind beat- long branch | <i>vaḷi poru neṭum cinaḷ</i><br>“long branch beaten by the<br>wind” |
| KT 118.3 | பலர்புகு வாயில்<br>many(h.) enter- door      | <i>palar puku vāyil</i><br>“a door entered by many”                 |

minimal clause for *pey*. i.a.:

|          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
| KT 7.6   | வேம்பயி லழுவம்<br>bamboo rustle- thicket | <i>vēy payil aḷuvam</i><br>“thicket rustling with<br>bamboo”  |
| KT 150.3 | சாந்துபுல ரகலம்<br>sandal dry- chest     | <i>cāntu pular akalam</i><br>“chest on which sandal<br>dries” |

Less common is the verbal root in clause-governing function, but still some examples can be found:

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| KT 53.3 | வேலன் புனைந்த வெறியயர் களந்தொறும்<br><i>vēlaṅ puṇainta vēri ayaṅ kaḷam-toruṅ</i><br>spear-he practised- Veri-dance immerse- floor-ever<br>“on every dance floor where they are immersed in the<br>Veri dance practiced by the spear-bearing [priest]” |
|---------|---|

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| KT 163.1-5 | பூழியர்<br>சிறுதலை வெள்ளைத் தோடுபரந் தன்ன<br>மீனார் குருகின் கானலம் பெருந்துறை<br>வெள்வீத் தாழைத் திரையலை<br>நள்ளென் கங்குலும்<br><i>pūḷiyar</i><br><i>ciru talai vēḷḷai tōṭu parantaṅṅa</i> |
|------------|--|

*mīn ār kurukin kāṇalam perum turai*  
*veḷ vī tālai tirai alai*  
*naḷḷen kaṅkulum*

Pūliyar(h.)

little head goat multitude spread-like  
 fish become-full- egret<sup>in</sup> seashore-grove- big ghat  
 white blossom screwpine wave slap-  
 deep(id.)- night<sup>um</sup>  
 “at deep night,  
 when the waves slap against the white-blossomed  
 screwpine tree  
 at the big ghat with a seashore grove with fish-eating  
 egrets  
 spread like a multitude of small-headed white goats  
 of the Pūliyar.”

verbal root for infinitive:

- KT 70.5      அணை மெல்லியள்      *aṇai melliyaḷ*  
 touch- soft-she      “she is soft to touch”
- NA 108.2c-3      கடும்கண் யாணை  
 அணையக் கண்ட வங்குடிக்குறவர்  
*kaṭum kaṇ yāṇai*  
*aṇaiya kaṇṭa am kuṭi kuṛavar*  
 fierce eye elephant  
 approach(Inf.) seen pretty hamlet hill-people(h.)  
 “the hill people with [their] pretty hamlets,  
 who have seen a fierce-eyed elephant approach”

|          |                                       |   |
|----------|---------------------------------------|---|
| KT 398.8 | கண்கலி முகுபனி<br>eye weep- shed- dew | <i>kaṇ kalil uku paṇi</i><br>“dew shed while the eyes weep” |
|----------|---------------------------------------|---|

verbal root for verbal noun:

|            |  |   |
|------------|--|---|
| KT 132.5   | தாய்காண் விருப்பின்<br>mother see yearning <sup>in</sup> | <i>tāy kāṇ viruppiṇ</i><br>“with yearning to see the mother”          |
| AN 66.11ab | காண்டல் விருப்பொடு<br>seeing desire-with                 | <i>kāṇṭal viruppoṭu</i><br>“with the desire to see”                   |
| KT 88.3    | துன்னருஞ் சாரல்<br>approach- difficult slope             | <i>tunn<sub>u</sub> arum cāral</i><br>“a slope difficult to approach” |
| KT 344.7   | பெறலரும் பொருள்<br>obtaining difficult wealth            | <i>peṛal arum poruḷ</i><br>“wealth difficult to obtain”               |

But see also:

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Tē 1.73.9.1 | அந்தமாதி யயனு மாலு மார்க்கு மறிவரியான்<br><i>antam āti ayaṇum mālum ārkkum ariv<sub>u</sub> ariyāṇ</i><br>end beginning Ayaṇ <sup>um</sup> Māl <sup>um</sup> who(dat.) <sup>um</sup> knowledge difficult-he<br>“As for beginning [and] end, he is difficult to know for Brahmā, Māl and everybody.” |
|-------------|---|

verbal root for absolutive:

|            |  |  |
|------------|--|--|
| KT 134.5   | கதழ்வீ ழருவி<br>haste- descend- waterfall            | <i>katal<sub>u</sub> vīl aruvi</i><br>“a hastily descending waterfall”         |
| AN 19.13cd | கதழ்ந்துவி ழவிரறல்<br>hastened descend- shine- water | <i>katal<sub>ntu</sub> vīl avir aral</i><br>“hastily descending shining water” |

KT 86.2b-3c நோயொடு புலம்பலை கலங்கிப்

பிறருங் கேட்குந ருளர்கொல்

*nōyoṭu pulamp<sub>u</sub> alai kalanki*

*pirarum kēṭkunar uḷar-kol*

pain-with loneliness harass- agitated

other<sup>um</sup> hear-they(h.) they-are(h.)<sup>kol</sup>

“are there others too who hear [it],

agitated, harassed by loneliness along with pain?”

The final examples are intriguing since here the verbal root stands in for a form that does not actually exist in Tamil, namely a gerundive:

KT 63.2 செய்வினை *cey viṇai* “the work to be done”

NA 24.8 செய்பொருள் *cey poruḷ* “the wealth to be made”

TV 2.4 தொழுநீ ரிணையடி *toḷu nīr iṇai aṭi*  
“the foot pair of a nature to be worshipped”

## 9b. Verbal Noun

Verbal nouns in -அல் *-al* and -(த்)தல் *-(t)tal* may be used as *nomina actionis* and as verbal complements, for example with வேண்டுதல் *vēṇṭutal*, “to be necessary”, or with வல்லுதல் *vallutal*, “to be able to”. In the oblique they stand for temporal/conditional (“when”) or causal (“since”) clauses, in the dative they have a final sense (“in order to”); verbal noun plus -உம் *-um* may be a sub-variety of temporal clause (“as soon as”). Strangely, verbal nouns too can be found in attributive position, with unclear semantic impact. Note that the short form in -அல் *-al* is homophonous with the negative imperative: செயல் *ceyal*, “doing” or “don’t do”. To express anteriority there is a perfective verbal noun in -அமை *-amai*. The negative verbal noun is formed with the verbal root plus -ஆமை *-āmai*. A very different type is formed in homophony with the participial noun n.sg., both perfective and imperfective (செய்வது/செய்தது *ceyvatu/ceytatu*), though very often the aspect does not seem to play a role. The most peculiar function of this n.sg. verbal noun develops in narrative texts where it can stand in for a finite verb with any person or number.

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| verbal root + <i>-al</i>          | செயல் <i>ceyal</i> , “doing”                                    |
| verbal root + <i>(t)tal</i>       | செய்தல் <i>ceytal</i> , “doing”, சேறல் <i>cel-tal</i> , “going” |
| perfective stem + <i>-amai</i>    | செய்தமை <i>ceytamai</i> , “having done”                         |
| verbal root + <i>-āmai</i> (neg.) | செய்யாமை <i>ceyyāmai</i> , “not doing”                          |
| perfective n.sg.                  | செய்தது <i>ceytatu</i> , “doing” (homophonous to part.n. n.sg.) |
| imperfective n.sg.                | செய்வது <i>ceyvatu</i> , “doing” (hom. to part.n. n.sg.)        |

Some verbal nouns are lexicalised like simple nouns: உணங்கல் *uṇaṅkal*, lit. “drying”, but used to refer to something dried such as fish or corn. There are examples without clear etymology such as பைதல் *paital*, “suffering”.

*nomen actionis*:

KT 353.3 ஆடுத லினிதே *āṭutal initē*  
bathing pleasant-it<sup>ē</sup> “bathing is pleasant”

verbal complement:

KT 79.8 அகறல் வல்லு வோரே *akaṛal valluvōrē*  
departing able-he(h.)<sup>ē</sup> “those who are able to depart”

final, especially if marked as dative:

KT 100.7 மணத்தற் கரிய பணைப்பெருந் தோளே  
*maṇattark<sub>u</sub> ariya paṇai perum tōlē*  
uniting(dat.) difficult-they(n.pl.) bamboo big shoulder<sup>ē</sup>  
“they are difficult to unite with, the big bamboo  
shoulders.”

attributive:

KT 79.3 அலங்க லுலவை *alaṅkal ulavai* “swaying twig”

KT 35.5 தண்வரல் வாடை *taṇ varal vāṭai* “cool coming  
north wind”

KT 28.4 அலமர லசைவளி *alamaral acai vaḷi* “whirling  
moving wind”

[*figura etymologica*:

KT 276.4 அறிதலு மறியார் *aritalum ariyār*  
knowing<sup>um</sup> know-not-they(h.) “they don’t know at all”]

From the bhakti period onwards, a verbal noun plus -உம் *-um* can be used as a temporal clause: “as soon as”

TVM 4.6.10.3f.

வண்டுவராபதி

மன்னனை யேத்துமி னேத்துதலுந் தொழுதாடுமே

*vaḷ tuvarāpati*

*mannanai ēttumiṅ ēttutalum toḷut<sub>u</sub> āḷumē*

generous Dvāravatī

king praise(ipt.) praising<sup>um</sup> worshipped dancing- [she]<sup>ē</sup>

“Praise the generous king of Dvārakā;

as soon as you praise [him] she will dance in worship.”

The oblique of the verbal noun in -அலின்/-(த)தலின் *-alin/-(t)alin* can form temporal/conditional clauses: “when, upon”

KT 167.5f. இனிதெனக் கணவ னுண்டலி

னுண்ணிதின் மகிழ்ந்தன் றொண்ணுதன் முகனே

*in<sub>it<sub>u</sub></sub> ena kaṇavan uṅṭalin*

*nunṇitiṅ mak<sub>i</sub>ḷntan<sub>r<sub>u</sub></sub> oḷ nutal mukanē*

sweet-it say(inf.) husband eating<sup>in</sup>

fine-it<sup>in</sup> delighted-it bright forehead face

“when the husband ate it, saying ‘it is excellent’,

the face of [her with] bright forehead was subtly

delighted.”

Occasionally other cases are marked, as the accusative in the following example:

KT 305.4 களைதலை யவராற் றலரே

*kaḷaitalai avar ārralarē*

removing(acc.) he(h.) able-not-he(h.)<sup>ē</sup>

“he is not able to remove.”



the perfective verbal noun:

NA 282.4 காதலன் றந்தமை யறியாது

*kātalaṅ tantamai ariyātu*

lover having-given know-not

“not knowing that the lover has given”

KT 92.2,5 பறவை | ... | இரைகொண் டமையின் விரையுமாற்  
செலவே

*paṛavai | ... | irai koṅṭamaiyiṅ viraiyumāl celavē*

bird | ... | food having-taken<sup>in</sup> hurrying-<sup>al</sup> going<sup>ē</sup>

“The birds, because of having taken up food, hurry in going.”

the negative verbal noun in -ஆமை -*āmai*:

NA 50.1 அறியாமையி னன்னை யஞ்சி

*ariyāmaiyiṅ aṅṅai aṅci*

not-knowing<sup>in</sup> mother feared

“being afraid of mother for her not knowing”

In this function, in some bhakti texts the suffix -ஆமை -*āmai* can be weakened into -ஆமே -*āmē*:

Tē 1.80.1.1f. கற்றாங்கொரி யோம்பி கலியை வாராமே

செற்றார் வாழ் தில்லை

*kaṛṛāṅk<sub>u</sub> eri ōmpi kaliyai vārāmē*

*ceṛṛār vāḷ tillai*

learned-like fire protected Kaliyuga(acc.) coming-not

prevented-they(h.) live- Tillai

“Tillai where live [the brahmins] who have prevented the Kaliyuga so that it may not come, protecting the fires like they have learned”

The verbal noun in neuter singular:

verbal noun as a subject:

NA 272.9 அம்பன் மூதா ரறிந்தது  
 நோயா கின்றது நோயினும் பெரிதே  
*ampal mūt<sub>u</sub> ūr arintatu*  
*nōy ākin<sub>r</sub>ratu nōy<sub>i</sub>num peritē.*  
 rumour old village knowing  
 pain became-it pain<sup>inum</sup> big-it<sup>ē</sup>.  
 “That the gossiping old village should know  
 has become a pain greater than pain.”

relative construction of n.sg. verbal noun plus *ōr* (the numeral):

KT 377.4f. நாடனொடு  
 செய்து கொண்டதோர் சிறுநன் னட்பே  
*nāṭanoṭu*  
*ceytu koṇṭatōr ciṟu nal naṭpē*  
 land-he-with  
 made taken-it one little good friendship<sup>ē</sup>  
 “A good little friendship that has been made  
 with the man from the land.”<sup>30</sup>

verbal noun in place of a finite verb:

PV 172.2f.

செருவில் | வலியார் வலியா ராய்மண் ணாள்வது  
*ceruvil | valiyār valiyār āy maṇ ṭṭavatu*

<sup>30</sup>Note that this is an early example also of the auxiliary கொள்-தல் *koḷ-tal* in middle function: a friendship that has been made by the girl for herself with the man.

fight(loc.) | strength-they(h.) strength-they(h.) become(abs.) earth  
ruling

“Those strong in battle, being strong, they rule the earth.”

A similar impersonal construction occurs with the verbal nouns of the செயல் *ceyal* or the செய்தல் *ceyatal* types, but this is more frequently found in theoretical texts:

TC 19i      இயற்கைப் பொருளை யிற்றெனக் கிளத்தல்  
*iyarkai porulai irru ena kiḷattal*  
nature meaning(acc.) this-it say(inf.) stating  
“[There is] stating about the natural meaning: ‘[it] is  
such.’”

## 10. The Moods (Imperative, Optative, Subjunctive?)

Moods are weakly developed in Early Old Tamil and further weaken in the course of time. At the same time the old texts record a bewildering variety of forms for the same simple function of, say, imperative, probably letting shine through some of the original regional and dialectal variation that was gradually eliminated with the creation of a supra-regional poetic idiom. In short, we find many imperatives, traces of two very different varieties of optatives and probably an old, disintegrating paradigm of what might have been a subjunctive.

Imperative

imperative (2<sup>nd</sup> person)

- |                                |                                 |   |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 1a verbal root                 | எழு <i>e<u>l</u></i>            | “rise!” (KT 11.4)                         |
| 1b (plural) v.r. + - <i>īr</i> | சொலீர் <i>colīr</i>             | “speak!” (Tē 2.2.8.3) post- <i>Caṅkam</i> |
| 2. - <i>m-ō/-ē/eṇa</i>         | மொழிமோ <i>mo<u>l</u>imō</i>     | “speak!” (KT 2.2)                         |
|                                | தெளிமே <i>te<u>l</u>imē</i>     | “let it be clear!” (KT 273.8)             |
| 3. - <i>min</i>                | ஓம்புமின் <i>ōmpu<u>m</u>in</i> | “beware!” (KT 184.2)                      |
| 4. - <i>mati</i>               | இனைமதி <i>i<u>n</u>aimati</i>   | “despair!” (KT 19.3)                      |
| 5. - <i>āy</i>                 | கேளாய் <i>ke<u>l</u>āy</i>      | “hear!” (KT 390.1)                        |
| 6. v.r. + - <i>um</i>          | சொல்லும் <i>col<u>l</u>um</i>   | “speak!” (PK 4.3) post- <i>Caṅkam</i>     |

negative imperative (2<sup>nd</sup> person)

- |                       |                             |                        |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| 7. v.r. + - <i>al</i> | செல்லல் <i>ce<u>l</u>al</i> | “don’t go!” (KT 179.3) |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|

With the imperative it is especially difficult to distinguish between singular and plural, probably because many forms expressed degrees of politeness and/or familiarity. Definitely type 1, the root imperative, was impolite then as it is now, although an exception has to be made for the bhakti works where god is often addressed with the mere verbal root. Note that the plural suffix -*kaḷ(ē)* may be added to type 1b and 3: உரையீர்கள் *uraiyīrkaḷ*, “tell” (TVM 9.7.10.1),

அறிமின்களே *arimīnkaḷē*, “know” (PK 201.4). Type 2 ending in simple -ம் *-m* is always followed by a particle -ஓ *-ō* or -ஏ *-ē*, unless embedded in direct speech with என *ena*. Type 5 in -ஆய் *-āy* is homophonous with the negative 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular: கூறாய் *kūrāy*, “you don’t talk” or “talk!”. Type 7, the negative imperative, is homophonous with the short form of the verbal noun: செயல் *ceyal*, “doing” or “don’t do!”. Later further imperative suffixes such as -மின் *-min* may be added to the negative imperative: துன்னன்மின் *tunnaṇmin* “don’t approach!” (Cint 799.4).

Perhaps an isolated form is a negative imperative plus a suffix of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person plural attested in NA 64.13: காணன்மார் *kāṇ-al-mār*, “may they not see”.

The early bhakti texts and *Kīlkkkaṇakku* show the first occurrences of an imperative based on a perfective stem, although seemingly without aspectual impact. Note that these forms are homophonous with the perfective of the 2<sup>nd</sup> person: கண்டாய் *kaṇṭāy*, pl. கண்டீர் *kaṇṭīr*, “you saw” or “see!”.

### Optatives

One of the forms called optative in modern times is used frequently and with all persons and numbers:

1. *-iya* வாழிய *vāḷiya* “may you live” (KT 19.3)
2. *-iyar* இறீஇயரே *iṟīyarō* “may they break” (KT 169.2)

It is homophonous with the second type of infinitive and has to be distinguished by context and its final position in the sentence. Like the infinitive, it is often metrically lengthened, and especially the form in -இயர் *-iyar* adds a particle -ஓ *-ō*, perhaps of politeness.

An isolated survivor of the same form in the first person plural may be உரைக்கியம் *uraikkiam*, “we will tell” (TV 55.2).

Another independent form exists that is difficult to analyse, with many occurrences and presumably an optative impact:

perfective stem + -இசின் *-icin*

It is used predominantly for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, but occasionally also for 3<sup>rd</sup> person. As a rule of thumb it goes with a 2<sup>nd</sup> person unless another person is specified by adding a pronoun: உரைத்திசின் நெஞ்சே *uraitticin neñcē*, “may you speak, heart” (KT 63.2), but யானே ... படர் கூர்ந்திசினே *yānē ... paṭar kūrntticinē*, “let me have affliction in abundance” (KT 216.3f.).

Subjunctive/Optative?

Finally there is the already mentioned row of further stray forms which adds up from two incomplete, but complementary paradigms, as suggested by Chevillard 1991. In my view they are best described as a subjunctive paradigm already weakening in the *Caṅkam* period itself and slowly merging into the “modern” optative in -க *-ka* for all persons. The main reason for that suggestion is that, although occurrences exist that seem to express a future, the majority of cases suggest a possibility, an uncertainty, a wish for something to happen.

- 1.sg. *-ku/kku* யான் எவன் செய்கோ *yāṅ evaṅ ceykō*,  
“what will/can I do?” (KT 25.2)
- 2.sg. *-(t)ti* எம்மை யுய்த்தியோ *emmai uyttiyō*,  
“will you send us?” (KT 63.4)
- 3.sg. *-ka* நாடன் வல்வே வருக *nāṭaṅ | vallē varuka*,  
“let him come fast” (KT 111.5f.)
- 1.pl. *-kam* நாணுகம் சிறிதே *nāṇukam ciritē*,  
“we may be a little ashamed” (KT 14.6)
- kum* கேட்கும் நின் குரலே *kēṭkum niṅ kuralē*,  
“we can hear your voice” (KT 163.5)

-*tum* எவ்வழி யறிதும் *evvali aritum*, “how can we know?”  
(KT 40.3)

2.pl. -(*t*)*tir* சேறிரோ *cērirō*, “will you go?” (KT 268.1)

3.pl. -*ka* பலருங் கூறுக *palarum kūruka*, “let many people talk”  
(KT 170.1)

In the ubiquitous formulaic address of the female friend வாழி தோழி *vāli tōli*, literally “may you live, friend”, but actually no more than a pronounced vocative “o friend”, வாழி *vāli* might be analysed as an irregular (simplified) form in -தி -*ti*; cf. ஆழி *āli*, “immerse yourself” (TVM 1.4.10.4).

However, already in the *Caṅkam* corpus itself “modern” optative forms occur where -க -*ka* can be used for all persons and numbers:

KT 14.2f. சின்மொழி யரிவையைப் | பெறுக தில்லம்ம யானே  
*cil molī arivaīyai | peruka-tillamma yāṇē*  
few word girl(acc.) may-obtain<sup>tillamma</sup> I<sup>ē</sup>  
“Ah, let me obtain the girl of few words!”

KT 23.3 அகவன் மகளே பாடுக பாட்டே  
*akaval makaḷē pāṭuka pāṭṭē*  
Akaval woman<sup>ē</sup> may-sing song<sup>ē</sup>  
“soothsaying woman, please sing a song!”

Moreover, the 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular in -தி -*ti* sometimes goes in the direction of a request and is counted by most modern grammars among the imperative suffixes:

KT 63.2 செய்வினை கைம்மிக வெண்ணுதி  
*cey viṇai kai mika eṇṇuti*  
do- work action much consider-you  
“Consider well the work to be done!”

The corresponding negative forms certainly seem to go in the direction of a negative optative:

v.r.-*al-ka* வாரற்க தில்ல *vārarka-tilla*, “may you not come” (KT 198.8)

v.r.-*ā-ti* சிதையாதி *citaiyāti*, “may you not waste” (AiAi 42.4)

In the bhakti corpus, hybrid forms of indicative and subjunctive are found: என் செய்கேன் என் திரு மகட்கே *en ceykēn en tirumakaṭkē*, “what can I do for my splendid daughter?” (TVM 7.2.8.4), a clear sequel to the *Caṅkam* formula யான் எவன் செய்கோ *yān evaṅ ceykō*, “what can I do?”.

A presumable periphrastic construction of a perfective stem plus ஈதல் *ītal*, “to give”, as root imperative or optative, is in existence, though rare: வந்தீக *va-nt<sub>u</sub>-īka*, “come!” (NA 221.12), also attested with a short vowel சென்றிக *ceṅ-ṛ<sub>u</sub>-ika*, “go!” (NA 321.8). Corresponding forms continue in the early *Kīlkkāṇakku*, *Kalittokai* and *Cilappatikāram*: வந்தீ *va-nt<sub>u</sub>-ī*, “come!” (Kali 85.20), வந்தீக *vant<sub>u</sub>-īka*, “may you come!” (Kali 86.10), எழுந்தீக *eḷu-nt<sub>u</sub>-īka*, “may you rise!” (AiE 55.2), காயந்தீயல் *kāy-nt<sub>u</sub>-ī-y-al*, “don’t be angry!” (AiE 7.1), கேட்டமின் *kēṭ-t<sub>u</sub>-īmin*, “listen!” (Cilap 21.40). The negative counterpart, based on negative absolutive plus ஈதல் *ītal*, is fairly common in the *Caṅkam* corpus: செல்லாதீமோ *cellātīmō*, “don’t go!” (KT 390.2), வாராதீமே *vārātīmē*, “don’t come!” (NA 336.11).

In an intermittent period of *Kīlkkāṇakku* into the bhakti period -ஏல் *-ēl* may be added to verbal roots and even finite forms in order to express a negative imperative: போகேல் *pōkēl*, “don’t go!” (TVM 10.3.8.1), but also, and here with a 1<sup>st</sup> person plural, சொல்லுதுமேல் *collutumēl*, “let us not speak!” (PK 297.1), காயந்தீயேல் *kāy-nt<sub>u</sub>-ī-y-ēl*, “don’t be angry!” (AiE 7.1v).



## 11. Coordination and Question

Among the basic syntactic structures that are marked by particles there are coordination and interrogation. One of the few surviving forms from Old Tamil to modern days is the enclitic -உம் *-um*, used on word level for the indefinite (“any”, “every”), for completion (“all”), for accentuation (“too”) and on phrase level for coordination of nouns and clauses. Contrary to the rule taught in any modern Tamil grammar book, however, in Old Tamil -உம் *-um* also coordinates sentences. A question may be marked, first of all, by an interrogative pronoun, often in combination with -ஏ *-ē* to mark the end of the sentence or to focalise. The old interrogative particles are -ஓ *-ō* and -கொல் *-kol*, generally the former for questions of evaluation and the latter for questions of information. Both of them can be combined into the rhetorical question கொல்லோ *kollō*, while -ஓ *-ō* coordinated with another -ஓ *-ō* marks an “either-or” question. Note that from bhakti times onwards -ஏ *-ē* can also be used to mark a question, and very rarely -ஆ *-ā* (the modern interrogative) can be seen in the same function.

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| -உம் <i>-um</i> , “and” | enclitic, coordinates not only nouns and clauses, but also sentences; on all members or only on the last |
| interrogative pronoun   | question   |
| -ஏ <i>-ē</i>            | end of a question and focalisation   |
| -ஓ <i>-ō</i>            | question (of evaluation)   |
| -கொல் <i>-kol</i>       | question (of information)  |
| கொல்லோ <i>kollō</i>     | rhetorical question  |
| -ஏ <i>-ē</i>            | interrogative particle in bhakti texts   |

noun coordination with -உம் -*um*:

- KT 20.1 அருளு மன்பு நீக்கி  
*aruḷum anpum nīkki*  
 consideration<sup>um</sup> love<sup>um</sup> discarded  
 “having discarded consideration and love”

For the coordination of two items there is a possibility of using sociative -ஒடு -*oṭu* instead:

- KT 190.1 நெறியிருங் கதுப்பொடு பெருந்தோ ணீவி  
*neri irum katuppoṭu perum tōḷ nīvi*  
 curl- dark hair-with big shoulder stroked  
 “stroking the big shoulders and the curly dark hair”

-உம் -*um* can occur on every member of a long row of coordinated nouns:

- Poy 29.1f. இறையு நிலனு மிருவிசம்புங் காற்று  
 மறைபுனலுஞ் செந்தீயு மாவான்  
*iraiyum nilaṇum iru vicumpum kārrum*  
*arai puṇalum cem tīyum āvāṇ*  
 lord<sup>um</sup> ground<sup>um</sup> dark sky<sup>um</sup> wind<sup>um</sup>  
 dash- flood<sup>um</sup> red fire<sup>um</sup> he-becomes  
 “The lord, the ground, the dark sky, the wind  
 the dashing flood and the red fire is he.”

When -உம் -*um* coordinates clauses it is added to the nonfinite verb forms (infinitives or absolutes) to be coordinated:

- Pēy 76.1f.+4 பொருப்பிடையே நின்றும் புனல்குளித்து மைந்து  
 நெருப்பிடையே நிற்கவுநீர் வேண்டா ...  
 லஃகாவே தீவினைக ளாய்ந்து

*porupp<sub>u</sub> iṭaiyē ninrum puṇal kuḷittum aintu*  
*nerupp<sub>u</sub> iṭaiyē nirkavum nīr vēṇṭā ...*  
*akkāvē tī vīṇaikaḷ āyntu*

height middle<sup>ē</sup> stood<sup>um</sup> flood bathed<sup>um</sup> five  
 fire middle<sup>ē</sup> stand(inf.)<sup>um</sup> you(pl.) need-not(a.)  
 pass-away-not(n.pl.)<sup>ē</sup> evil deeds dwindled  
 “Without that you must stand on heights, bathe in  
 floods and stand between five fires, ...  
 [your] evil deeds will dwindle [and] pass away.”

When -உம் *-um* coordinates sentences, it is usually added to the first member of the main clause (that is, not to an attribute but to the subject or object).

simple coordination:

KT 31.4,6 யானுமோ ராடுகள மகனே ...  
 பீடுகெழு குரிசிலுமோ ராடுகள மகனே  
*yānum ōr āṭukaḷam makaḷē ...*  
*pīṭu keḷu kuricilum ōr āṭukaḷam makaṇē*  
 I<sup>um</sup> one dance-floor daughter<sup>ē</sup> ...  
 excellence have- lord<sup>um</sup> one dance-floor son<sup>ē</sup>  
 “I am a woman on the dance floor ...  
 and the excellent lord is a man on the dance floor.”

KT 51.3-6 சேர்ப்பனை  
 யானுங் காதலென் யாயுநனி வெய்ய  
 ளெந்தையுங் கொடஇயர் வேண்டு  
 மம்ப லூரு மவனொடு மொழிமே  
*cērppanai*  
*yānum kātalen yāyum nani veyya!*

*entaiyum koṭiyar vēṅṭum*

*ampal ūrum avaṅoṭu moḷimē*

coast-he(acc.)

I<sup>um</sup> love-I my-mother<sup>um</sup> abundant hot-she

my-father<sup>um</sup> give must(hab.fut.)

rumour village<sup>um</sup> he-with it-speaks<sup>ē</sup>

“The man from the coast,

I love him and my mother is very keen on him

and my father must give [me to him]

and [even] the gossiping village is speaking in his  
favour.”

However, poetic license comes into play for example if one of the coordinated clauses does not contain the required element or for the sake of poetic parallelism (-உம் *-um* added to the first foot of the line).

KT 17

மாவென மடலு மூர்ப பூவெனக்

குவிமுகி மெருக்கங் கண்ணியுஞ் சூடுப

மறுகி னார்க்கவும் படுப

பிறிது மாகுப காமங்காழ்க் கொளினே

*mā eṇa maṭalum ūrpa pū eṇa*

*kuvi mukil erukkam kaṇṇiyum cūṭupa*

*marukiṅ ārkkavum paṭupa*

*piṛitum ākupa kāmam kālkkoliṅē*

horse say Palmyra-stem<sup>um</sup> they-mount flower say

heap- bud Yarcum chaplet<sup>um</sup> they-wear

street<sup>in</sup> shout<sup>um</sup> they-suffer

other-it<sup>um</sup> they-become desire coming-to-a-climax-if<sup>ē</sup>

“They will mount palmyra stems as horses and they will wear chaplets of heaped Yarcum buds as flowers and they will be shouted at in the streets and another thing will happen, when desire is over-ripe.”

- KT 113.1f. ஊர்க்கு மணித்தே பொய்கை பொய்கைக்குச்  
சேய்த்து மன்றே சிறுகான் யாறே  
*ūrkkum aṇittē poykai poykaikku*  
*cēyttum aṇrē ciru kān yārē*  
village(dat.)<sup>um</sup> close-it<sup>ē</sup> pond pond(dat.)  
distance-it<sup>um</sup> not-so-it<sup>ē</sup> little forest river<sup>ē</sup>  
“Close to the village is the pond and from the pond not far is the little forest river.”

-உம் -um only on the second member:

- KT 62.4f. நல்லோண் மேனி  
முறியினும் வாய்வது முயங்கற்கு மினிதே  
*nallōḷ mēni*  
*muriyinum vāyvatu muyaṅkarkum initē*  
good-she body  
shoot<sup>inum</sup> more-excellent-it embracing(dat.)<sup>um</sup> pleasant-it<sup>ē</sup>  
“The body of the good one,  
it surpasses a sprout [in softness] and is pleasant to embrace.”

- KT 74.2f.,5 குன்ற நாடன்  
யாந்தன் படர்ந்தமை யறியான் றானும் ...  
சாயின னென்ப  
*kunram nāṭan*

*yām taṅ paṭarntamai ariyāṅ tāṅum ...*  
*cāyinaṅ eṅpa*

hill land-he

we him- thought-we(acc.) know-not-he self<sup>um</sup> ...

he-was-emaciated they-say

“The man from the hilly land

does not know that we have been thinking of him

and he himself has become emaciated, they say.”

Rarely coordination can be asyndetic, that is, coordinate unrelated sentences of different syntactic structure:

KT 161.1f.,4 பொழுது மெல்லின்று பெயலு மோவாது

கழுதுகண் பனிப்ப வீசு மதன்றலை ...

அன்னா வென்னு மன்னையு மன்னோ

*polutum el inru peyalum ovātu*

*kalutu kaṅ paṅippa vīcum atanralai ...*

*annā ennum annaiyum annō*

time<sup>um</sup> light is-not raining<sup>um</sup> stop-not-it

demon eye shiver throwing- that(obl.+loc.) ...

mother(voc.) saying- mother<sup>um</sup> alas!

“Time without light and the rain without stopping

hurls down, so that demon eyes shiver, and on top of

that

mother who says “mother!”, alas.”

interrogative pronoun:

KT 158.6 இஃதெவனே

*ikt<sub>u</sub> evaṅē*

this what<sup>e</sup>

“What is this?”

KT 18.3 யாரஃ தறிந்திசி னோரே *yār akt<sub>u</sub> arinticinōrē*  
 who that known-they(h.)<sup>ē</sup> “Who are those who  
 understand that?”

inter.pron. + focalisation:

KT 140.4f. எவ்வம் | யாங்கறிந் தன்றிவ் வழுங்க லூரே  
*evvam | yānk<sub>u</sub> arintanru i aluṅkal ūrē*  
 trouble | what it-knew this- noise village<sup>ē</sup>  
 “What has it understood of the trouble, this noisy  
 village?”

questions with -கொல் -kol:

KT 28.1 முட்டு வேன்கொ றாக்கு வேன்கொல்  
*muṭṭuvēṅ-kol tākkuvēṅ-kol*  
 I-attack<sup>kol</sup> I-strike-against<sup>kol</sup>  
 “Shall I attack? Shall I strike?”

KT 177.4f. இன்றவர் | வருவர்கொல் வாழி தோழி  
*iṅr<sub>u</sub> avar | varuvar-kol vāḷi tōḷi*  
 today he(h.) | he-comes(h.)<sup>kol</sup> live(sub.) friend  
 “Will he come today, o friend?”

Also -கொல் -kol and -ஓ -ō can appear in coordination with -ஏ -ē for focalisation:

KT 5.1 அதுகொ றோழி காம நோயே  
*atu-kol tōḷi kāma nōyē*  
 that<sup>kol</sup> friend desire pain<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Is that, friend, the pain of desire?”

KT 160.6 இஃதோ தோழிநங் காதலர் வரைவே  
*iktō tōḷi nam kātalar varaivē*

this<sup>o</sup> friend our- lover(h.) marriage<sup>e</sup>

“Is this, friend, the marriage with our lover?”

KT 2.4f.

அரிவை கூந்தலி

னறியவு முளவோநீ யறியும் பூவே

*arivai kūntalin*

*nariyavum ulavō nī ariyum pūvē*

young-woman tresses<sup>in</sup>

fragrant-they(n.pl.)<sup>um</sup> they-are(n.pl.)<sup>o</sup> you knowing- flower<sup>e</sup>

“Do [flowers] exist that are as fragrant as the tresses  
of the young woman, among the flowers you know?”

Double -ஓ -o can be employed for either-or:

KT 142.2f.

பூங்கண் பேதை

தானறிந் தனளோ விலளோ

*pūm kaṇ pētai*

*tāṇ arintaṇalō ilalō*

flower eye innocence

self she-knew<sup>o</sup> not-she<sup>o</sup>

“The flower-eyed innocence,  
did she know or did she not?”

A rhetorical question, that is, a question that does not really ask for information but is meant to vent the speaker’s feelings, can be marked with கொல்லோ *kollō*:

KT 16.1

உள்ளார் கொல்லோ தோழி

*uḷḷār-kollō tōḷi*

remember-not-he(h.)<sup>kollō</sup>

“Does he not  
remember, friend?”



- KT 279.4 இதுபொழு தாகவும் வாரார் கொல்லோ  
*itu poḷut<sub>u</sub> ākavum vārār-kollō*  
 this time become(inf.)<sup>um</sup> come-not-he(h.)<sup>kollō</sup>  
 “Although the time is this, will he not come?”
- KT 180.5 எய்தினர் கொல்லோ பொருளே *eytiṇar-kollō poruḷē*  
 he-obtained<sup>kollō</sup> wealth<sup>ē</sup> “Did he obtain it –  
 wealth?”

In bhakti texts also -ஏ -ē may be found as an interrogative particle:

- Poy 95.2f. மூவாத | மாகதிகண் செல்லும் வகையுண்டே  
*mūvāta | mā kati-kaṇ cellum vakai uṇṭē*  
 age-not great way(loc.) going- means it-is<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Is there a means to go on the ageless great way?”

## 12. Embedded Clauses with *ākuta*, *eṇṇuta* and *pōl-tal*

As a rule, Old Tamil has one finite verb per sentence. However, there are four productive exceptions, namely an insertion (of an imperative or optative: காண் *kāṇ*, “see!”, என்ப *eṇpa*, “they say”), a *mureccam* (a finite form standing in for a nonfinite one), a double verb form (such as some forms of negation), and finally embedding – a small number of verbs have special dispensation to be preceded by a finite form. The former three are treated in Chapter 15a; both on serial verbs and embedding, see Steever 1988, 1993.

The three primary embedding verbs are:

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| என் <i>eṇ</i> , “to say”          | verbal root (என் <i>eṇ</i> ), infinitive (என <i>eṇa</i> ), absolutive (என்று <i>eṇru</i> ), perfective <i>peyareccam</i> (என்ற <i>eṇra</i> ), finite forms [occasionally <b>other verba dicendi</b> ]: direct speech or thought                             |
| ஆகு <i>āku</i> , “to become”      | verbal root (ஆ <i>ā</i> ), absolutive (ஆகி/ஆய் <i>āki/āy</i> ), infinitive (ஆக <i>āka</i> ), perfective <i>peyareccam</i> (ஆய/ஆகிய <i>āya/ākiya</i> ), verbal noun (ஆகல்/ஆகுதல் <i>ākal/ākuta</i> ): concomitance and attribution (“when”, “since”, “that”) |
| போல் <i>pōl</i> , “to be similar” | verbal root (போல் <i>pōl</i> ), absolutive (போன்று <i>pōṇru</i> ), infinitive (போல <i>pōla</i> ), perfective <i>peyareccam</i> (போன்ற <i>pōṇra</i> ): comparative clause; habitual future (போலும் <i>pōlum</i> ): “it seems that”                           |

direct speech or thought:

KT 82.2      அழாஅ லென்றுநம் மழுதகண் டுடைப்பார்  
*aḷāal eṇru nam aḷuta kaṇ tuṭaippār*

don't-cry said our- cried- eye he-wipes(h.)

“Don't cry!” he says [and] wipes our eyes that cried.”

KT 141.1-3 வளைவாய்ச் சிறுகிளி விளைதினைக் கடிஇயர்

செல்கென் றோளே யன்னை யெனநீ

சொல்லி னெவனோ தோழி

*valai vāy ciru kiḷi viḷai tinai kaṭṭiyar*

*celka enrōḷē annai ena nī*

*collin evanō tōli*

curve- mouth little parakeet ripen- millet chase(inf.)

may-go said-she<sup>ē</sup> mother say(inf.) you

say-if what<sup>ō</sup> friend

“What if [you] said, friend:

‘Mother is one who said, ‘let her go

in order to chase from the ripening millet

the little parakeets with curved beaks’?”

KT 187.5 வலிய னென்னாது மெலியுமென் னெஞ்சே

*valiyan ennātu meliyum en neñcē*

hard-he say-not softening-it my- heart<sup>ē</sup>

“Without saying ‘he is hard’ my heart is softening.”

The quotative verb என்னுதல் *ennutal* may on occasion be replaced by an other *verbum dicendi*:

KT 148.6 கனவோ மற்றிது வினவுவல் யானே

*kanavō marr<sub>u</sub> itu viṇavuval yānē*

dream<sup>ōmarru</sup> this I-ask I<sup>ē</sup>

“Is this but a dream?’ I ask.”

An additional possible function of the quotative verb is that of concluding an enumeration:

KT 32.1-3    காலையும் பகலுங் கையறு மாலையு  
 மூர்துஞ்சு யாமமும் விடியலு மென்றிப்  
 பொழுதிடை தெரியிற் பொய்யே காமம்  
*kālaiyum pakalum kai aru mālaiyum*  
*ūr tuñcu yāmamum viṭiyalum enr<sub>u</sub> i*  
*pol<sub>u</sub>t<sub>u</sub> ṭtai teriyiṅ poyyē kāmam*  
 morning<sup>um</sup> midday<sup>um</sup> action cease- evening<sup>um</sup>  
 village sleep- midnight<sup>um</sup> dawn<sup>um</sup> said this-  
 time-of-day between distinguish-if lie<sup>e</sup> desire  
 “Morning, midday, action-ending evening,  
 midnight when the village sleeps and dawn –  
 when one [still] distinguishes between these times,  
 desire is only a lie.”

An additional special function of the embedding verbs is as a quasi postposition in the sense of taking something for something else (என *ena*) or using something as an instrument (ஆ, ஆக *ā, āka*):

KT 17.1f.மாவென மடலு மூர்ப. பூவெனக்  
 குவிமுகி மெருக்கங் கண்ணியுஞ் குடுப  
*mā ena maṭalum ūrpa. pū ena*  
*kuvī mukil erukkam kaṇṇiyum cūṭupa*  
 horse say(inf.) Palmyra-stem<sup>um</sup> they-mount flower say(inf.)  
 heap- bud Yarcum chaplet<sup>um</sup> they-wear  
 “They will mount palmyra stems as horses and as flowers  
 they will wear chaplets of Yarcum in heaped buds.”

Poy 1.1-3 வையந் தகளியா வார்கடலே நெய்யாக  
 வெய்ய கதிரோன் விளக்காகச் – செய்ய  
 சுடராழியா னடிக்கே சூட்டினேன் சொன்மாலை  
*vaiyam takali ā vār kaṭalē ney āka*  
*veyya katirōṇ viḷakk, āka – ceyya*  
*cuṭar āḷiyāṇ aṭikkē cūṭṭinēṇ col mālai*  
 earth bowl become- flow- sea oil become(inf.)  
 hot ray-he light become(inf.) red  
 glow- discus-he foot(dat.)<sup>e</sup> I-put-on word garland  
 “With the earth as the bowl, the flowing sea as oil  
 [and] him with hot rays as the light I put a word garland  
 on the feet of him with the red-glowing discus.”

The use of the infinitive ஆக *āka* in an embedding construction allows more or less the same range of shades as the verbal root + *a*-type of infinitive sub-clause (cf. infinitive type 1, p. 93f.), with the advantage of being able to clearly mark person, number, aspect and mood:

“when”

KT 265.7f. யான்றனக் குரைத்தனெ னாக  
 தானா ணினன்  
*yāṇ taṇakk, uraittanen āka*  
*tāṇ nāṇiṇaṇ*  
 I him(dat.) I-told become(inf.)  
 he he-was-ashamed  
 “When I told him  
 he himself became ashamed.”

“so that”

KT 172.3f. எமிய மாக வீங்குத் துறந்தோர்  
 தமிழ ராக வினியர் கொல்லோ

*emiyam āka īnku turantōr*  
*tamiyar āka iṇiyar-kollō*  
 our-we become(inf.) here abandoned-he(h.)  
 alone-he(h.) become(inf.) pleasant-he(h.)<sup>kollō</sup>  
 “He who abandoned [us] here so that we are on our own,  
 is it pleasing to him to be alone?”

The absolutive ஆகி *āki* allows the correlation of independent events and can often be rendered by “since”:

KT 329.5,7 பயிலிரு ணடுநாட் டுயிலரி தாகி ...

நன்மலர் மழைக்கணிற் கெளியவாற் பனியே  
*payil iruḷ naṭunāḷ tuyil arit<sub>u</sub> āki ...*  
*nal malar maḷai kaṇirk<sub>u</sub> eḷiyavāl paṇiyē*  
 be-dense- darkness midnight sleep difficult-it  
 become(a.)...  
 good blossom rain eye(dat.) easy-they(n.pl.)<sup>āl</sup> dew<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Since sleep is difficult at midnight in the dense darkness,  
 tears [come] easy indeed to the rain eyes, good blossoms.”

“since” (~ apposition)

NA 215.8f. இன்றுநீ யிவணை யாகி யெம்மொடு

தங்கி னெவனோ தெய்ய  
*iṇru nī ivaṇai āki emmoṭu*  
*taṅkiṇ evaṇō teyya*  
 today you here-you become(abs.) us-with  
 stay-if what<sup>ē</sup> *teyya*  
 “Since you are here today,  
 what if you stayed with us, please?”

The perfective *peyareccam* ஆய/ஆகிய *āya/ākiya* can be used for specified attribution.

attribution

KT 181.1,7 இதுமற் றெவனோ தோழி ...  
 பெருமுது பெண்டிரே மாகிய நமக்கே  
*itu-marr\_u evaṇō tōḷi ...*  
*peru mutu peṇṭirēm ākiya namakkē*  
 this<sup>marru</sup> what<sup>o</sup> friend ...  
 big old women-we become(p.)- us(dat.)<sup>ē</sup>  
 “What is this, friend  
 to us who have become great old women?”

temporal clause

KT 178.5-7 யாநுமக் | கரிய மாகிய காலைப்  
 பெரிய நோன்றனிர்.  
*yām numakk\_u | ariyam ākiya kālai*  
*periya nōṇranir.*  
 we you(dat.pl.) | difficult-we become(p.)- time  
 big-they(n.pl) you-suffered(pl.).  
 “At the time we were difficult for you [to reach],  
 you suffered greatly.”

Less frequently the verbal noun ஆகல்/ஆகுதல் *ākal/ākutal* can be found to express indirect speech or thought content: “that”

KT 386.4-6 மாலை  
 நிலம்பரந் தன்ன புன்கணாடு  
 புலம்புடைத் தாகுத லறியேன் யானே  
*mālai*

*nilam parantanna punkaṇoṭu*  
*pulamp<sub>u</sub> uṭaitt<sub>u</sub> ākutaḷ ariyēṇ yāṇē*  
 evening  
 ground spread-like sorrow-with  
 loneliness possess-it becoming know-not-I I<sup>ē</sup>  
 “That the evening would possess loneliness  
 along with sorrow as if spread on the ground  
 I did not know.”

Embedded comparison clauses with போல்-தல் *pōl-tal* are considerably less frequent:

- KT 147.3f. நுண்பூண் மடந்தையைத் தந்தோய் போல  
 வின்றுயி லெடுப்புதி கனவே  
*nun pūṇ maṭantaiyai tantōy pōla*  
*iṇ tuyil eṭupputi kaṇavē*  
 fine ornament girl(acc.) given-you be-similar(inf.)  
 pleasant sleep you-arouse(sub.) dream<sup>ē</sup>  
 “As if you brought [my] girl with fine ornaments  
 you would rouse [me] from sweet sleep, dream.”
- AN 177.13 வல்லே வருவர் போலும்  
*vallē varuvar pōlum*  
 quickly come-he(h.) it-seems  
 “He will come quickly, it seems.”



### 13. Conditional (Factual and Hypothetical), Concessive, Causal Clauses

Old Tamil starts off with two clear forms for the conditional, one the simple verbal root plus the suffix -இன் *-in*, the other based on the frozen conditional form of the embedding verb ஆகுதல் *ākutaḷ*, i.e., ஆயின் *āyin*, “if”. The former does not allow for marking aspect, tense or mood, but can take a subject; the latter embeds a finite verb. Occasionally the frozen conditional of the embedding verb என்னுதல் *ennutaḷ* is already found in the same function, i.e., எனின் *enin*, “if”. From the early *Kīlkkanaḷ* corpus onwards and for a number of centuries we find a bewildering variety of further suffixes and postpositions that express conditional, some on the verbal root as was the case with -இன் *-in*, some on finite forms, and some on the absolutive, as will be the case later. Almost all of them are transitional, but one of them is the one form destined to make it into modern formal Tamil, that is, absolutive plus -ஆல் *-āl*. As mentioned before on p. 95, the distinction between a conditional and a temporal clause has never been clear-cut, and often “if” rather means “when”.

By adding -உம் *-um* to any conditional form a concessive can be formed (“although”), but also absolutive or infinitive plus -உம் *-um* can stand either in coordination or for a concessive.

One further form of the embedding verb ஆகுதல் *ākutaḷ*, the oblique of the verbal noun, under the two forms ஆகலின் *ākaliṅ* and ஆதலின் *ātaḷiṅ*, is frozen into a postposition that allows forming causal clauses (“because”). Moreover there are a few demonstrative pronouns from the அ- *a-* stem that are frozen into quasi conjunctions, namely ஆனால் *ānāl*, அதனால் *ataṅāl* (“therefore”), அதன்றலை *ataṅṛalai* (“moreover”, literally “on top of that”) and அதனெதிர் *atanetir* (“in view of that”).

## forms of the conditional

|   |   |
|---|---|
| verbal root + -இன் <i>-in</i><br>(strong verbs + <i>-ppin</i> )   | பொய்ப்பின் <i>poyppin</i> ,<br>“if he lies”   |
| finite verb + ஆயின் <i>āyin</i> (embedding)   | வாரார் ஆயின் <i>vārār āyin</i> ,<br>“if he does not come”   |
| finite verb + எனின் <i>enin</i> (embedding)   | (rare in the old corpus)  |
| finite verb + ஆகில் <i>ākil</i> (embedding)   | later (bhakti)  |
| verbal root + -இல் <i>-il</i> , -எல் <i>-ēl</i><br>(strong verbs + ப்பில்/க்கில் <i>-ppil/-kkil</i> ,<br>ப்பேல்/க்கேல் <i>-ppēl/-kkēl</i> ) | வருந்தேல் <i>varuntēl</i> , “if x<br>suffers”; transitional<br>உகக்கில் <i>ukakkil</i> ,<br>“if x rejoices” |
| (finite verb + -எல்/-ஆல் <i>-ēl/-āl</i> )   | transitional  |
| abs. + -ஆல் <i>-āl</i>  | செய்தால் <i>ceytāl</i> ; post-<br><i>Caṅkam</i> <sup>31</sup> up to modern                                  |

## forms of the concessive

|   |   |
|---|---|
| abs. + -உம் <i>-um</i>                                      | செய்தும் <i>ceytum</i> ;<br>coordinated or concessive |
| inf. + -உம் <i>-um</i>                                      | செய்யவும் <i>ceyyavum</i> ; ig.                       |
| v.r. + -இனும் <i>-inum</i> (strong verbs + <i>-ppinum</i> ) |   |
| f.v. + ஆயினும் <i>āyinum</i> (embedding)                    |   |
| f.v. + எனினும் <i>eninum</i> (embedding)                    | (rare in the old corpus)                              |
| f.v. + ஆகிலும் <i>ākilum</i> (embedding)                    | later (bhakti)  |
| f.v. + -எலும் <i>-ēlum</i> (embedding)                      | later (bhakti)  |
| v.r. + -இலும் <i>-ilum</i> (strong verbs + <i>-ppilum</i> ) | transitional  |
| abs. + -ஆலும் <i>-ālum</i>                                  | post- <i>Caṅkam</i> up to modern                      |

<sup>31</sup> A few isolated forms such as *kaṅṅāl* in PN 390.25 can be found.

## postpositions and conjunctions of reasoning

|                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ஆகலின்/ஆதலின் <i>ākalin/ātalin</i> | causal clause: “because” |
| ஆனால்/அதனால் <i>ānāl/ataṇāl</i>    | “therefore”              |
| அதன்றலை <i>ataṇralai</i>           | “moreover”               |
| அதனெதிர் <i>ataṇetir</i>           | “in view of that”        |

## conditional clauses

-இன் *-in* type impersonal:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| KT 102.1 | உள்ளி னுள்ளம் வேமே<br><i>uḷḷin uḷḷam vēmē</i><br>remember-if inside burn(hab.fut.) <sup>ē</sup><br>“when remembering, the inside burns.” |
|----------|--|

-இன் *-in* type unmarked for subject:

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| KT 280.4f. | ஒருநாள் புணரப் புணரி<br>னரைநாள் வாழ்க்கையும் வேண்டலென் யானே<br><i>oru nāl puṇara puṇarin</i><br><i>arai nāl vāḷkkaiyum vēṇṭalen yāṇē</i><br>one day unite(inf.) unite-if<br>half day life <sup>um</sup> I-need-not I <sup>ē</sup><br>“If I can be in union [with her] for a single day,<br>I will not need living for [another] half day.” |
|------------|--|

-இன் *-in* type marked for subject:

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| KT 316.2f. | அன்னை யறியி   னுளெனோ வாழி தோழி<br><i>annai ariyin   uḷenō vāḷi tōḷi</i><br>mother know-if   be-I <sup>o</sup> live(sub.) friend<br>“If mother gets to know, will I [still] exist, friend?” |
|------------|--|

ஆயின் *āyīn* type:

- KT 174.5f. பொருள்வயிற் பிரிவா ராயினிவ் வுலகத்துப்  
 பொருளே மன்ற பொருளே  
*poruḷvayin pirivār āyīn i ulakattu*  
*poruḷē-manra poruḷē*  
 wealth-for he-separates(h.) if this- world-  
 wealth<sup>ē manra</sup> wealth<sup>ē</sup>  
 “If he separates for the sake of wealth, in this world  
 truly only wealth is wealth.”

ஆயின் *āyīn* type hypothetical:

- KT 148.5f. காரன் றென்றி யாயின்  
 கனவோ மற்றிது வினவுவல் யானே  
*kār anru enri āyīn*  
*kaṇavō marru itu viṇavuval yāṇē*  
 rainy-season is-not-so you-say(sub.) if  
 dream<sup>ō marru</sup> this I-ask I<sup>ē</sup>  
 “If you were to say ‘this is not the rainy season’,  
 I should ask ‘is this but a dream?’”

ஆயின் *āyīn* type with past tense and hypothetical:

- KT 350.2f. செல்லா தீமெனச்  
 சொல்லின மாயிற் செல்வர் கொல்லோ  
*cellātīm-ēna*  
*collinam āyīn celvar-kollō*  
 don’t go say(inf.)  
 we-spoke if go-he(h.)<sup>kollō</sup>

“If we were to say ‘don’t go!’,  
would he [still] go?”

- KT 274.8 அணிமுலை யாக முள்கினஞ் செலினே  
*aṇi mulai ākam uḷkinam celinē*  
adorn- breast bosom we-remembered go-if<sup>e</sup>  
“If we were to go, we would remember [her] bosom  
with adorning breasts.”

ஆயின் *āyin* type as subject clause:

- KT 98.1-3 அவர் | துன்ன சென்று செப்புநர் பெறினே  
நன்றுமன் வாழி தோழி  
*avar | tunṇa ceṇru ceppunar perinē*  
*nanru-man vāli tōli*  
he(h.) | approach(inf.) gone saying-he(h.) obtain-if<sup>e</sup>  
good-it<sup>man</sup> live(sub.) friend  
“If we were to obtain someone who goes to approach  
[and] talks to him, that would be good indeed, o friend.”

எனின் *enin* type:

- NA 334.8f. மின்னுவசி விளக்கத்து வருமெனி  
னென்னோ தோழிநம் மின்னாயிர் நிலையே  
*miṇṇu vaci viḷakkattu varum enin*  
*en-ō tōli nam in uyir nilai-ē*  
lightning split lamp- coming- say-if  
what<sup>o</sup> friend our- pleasant life state<sup>e</sup>  
“If he comes with a split of lightning for a lamp,  
what, friend, will be the state of our sweet life?”

ஆகில் *ākil* type:

Poy 88.4      என்னாகி லென்னே யெனக்கு  
*eṇ ākil eṇṇē eṇakku*  
 what if what<sup>ē</sup> me(dat.)  
 “If anything should happen, what [is it] to me?”

finite verb plus -ஏல் -*ēl*:

AiAi 9.2      அழிய வேண்டா தெரிதியேல்  
*aḷiya vēṇṭā teritiyēl*  
 be-desolate(inf.) need-not(n.sg.) understand-you(sub)<sup>ēl</sup>  
 “If you understood, it wouldn’t be necessary [for you]  
 to be desolate.”

verbal root plus -இல் -*il*:

Pēy 82.1      உணரி லுணர்வரியன்  
*uṇaril uṇarv<sub>u</sub> ariyan*  
 perceive-if perception difficult-he  
 “When perceiving, he is difficult to perceive.”

absolutive plus -ஆல் -*āl*:

Pēy 25.1      தொழுதால் பழுதுண்டே  
*tolutāl palut<sub>u</sub> uṇṭē*  
 worshipped-if mistake it-is<sup>ē</sup>  
 “If you worship, is it a mistake?”

concessives

absolutive plus -உம் -*um*:

KT 64.4f.      நோயே மாகுத லறிந்துஞ்  
 சேயர் தோழி சேய்நாட் டோரே

*nōyēm ākutaḷ arintum*

*cēyar tōḷi cēy nāṭṭōrē.*

pain-we becoming known<sup>um</sup>

distance-he(h.) friend distance land-he(h.)<sup>ē</sup>

“Even though knowing that we would feel pain,  
he is distant, friend, in a distant land is he.”

infinitive plus -உம் -*um*:

KT 311.2f. வலவன் றாங்கவு

நில்லாது கழிந்த கல்லென் கடுந்தேர்

*valavaṇ tāṅkavum*

*nillātu kaḷinta kalleṇ kaṭum tēr*

charioteer restrain(inf.)<sup>um</sup>

stand-not passed-by noisy fast chariot

“Even though restrained by the charioteer

[there was] a noisy fast chariot that passed by without  
stopping.”

verbal root plus -இன் -*in*:

KT 210.4,6 எழுகலத் தேந்தினுஞ் சிறிதென் றோழி ...

விருந்துவரக் கரைந்த காக்கையது பலியே

*eḷu kalatt<sub>u</sub> ēntiṇum cirit<sub>u</sub> eṇ tōḷi ...*

*viruntu vara karainta kākkaiyatu paliyē*

seven pot- offer-if-even little-it my- friend ...

guest come(inf.) cried- crow(gen.) offering<sup>ē</sup>

“Even if we were to offer seven pots [of rice], small,  
my friend,

would it be as a gift to the crow that cawed that a guest  
would come.”

ஆயினும் *āyīnum*:

KT 42.1,4 காம மொழிவ தாயினும் ...  
 எந்தொடர்புந் தேயுமோ  
*kāmam oḻivatu āyīnum ...*  
*em toṭarpum tēyumō*  
 desire ceasing-it if-even ...  
 our- attachment<sup>um</sup> dwindling-<sup>ō</sup>  
 “Even if passion is something that ceases,  
 will our attachment dwindle, too?”

ஆகிலும் *ākilum*:

Poy 55.1f. அவன்றம ரெவ்வினைய ராகிலு மெங்கோ |  
 னவன்றமரே  
*avaṇ tamar e viṇaiyar ākilum em kōṇ | avaṇ tamarē*  
 he their-people(h.) what- karma if-even our- king | his  
 people<sup>ē</sup>  
 “His people, whatever [their] karma, are our king’s  
 people.”

-ஏலும் *-ēlum*: Note that -ஏல்/-ஏலும் *-ēl/-ēlum* may even occur with  
 predicate nouns:

Pēy 81.1f. நெஞ்சா னினைப்பரிய னேலு நிலைபெற்றென்  
 னெஞ்சமே பேசாய்  
*neñcāl ninaipp<sub>u</sub> ariyaṇēlum nilai perru eṇ*  
*neñcamē pēcāy*  
 heart(inst.) thinking difficult-he<sup>ēlum</sup> position obtained my-  
 heart<sup>ē</sup> speak(ipt.)  
 “Though he is difficult to think of by the heart, take a stand,  
 my heart, speak.”



causal clause with ஆகலின் *ākalin*:

NA 99.9f. பிடவுங் கொன்றையுங் கோடலு

மடவ வாகலின் மலர்ந்தன பலவே

*piṭavum konraiyum kōṭalum*

*maṭava ākalin malarntaṇa palavē*

large-flowered-jasmine<sup>um</sup> laburnum<sup>um</sup> white-Malabar-lily<sup>um</sup>

ignorant-they(n.pl.) because they-flowered(n.pl.) any(n.pl.)<sup>ē</sup>

“large-flowered jasmine, laburnum and white Malabar lily,

because they are foolish they have flowered, many [of

them].”

அதனால் *ataṇāl*: “therefore”

NA 67.9f. எமரும் வேட்டம் புக்கனர். அதனா

றங்கி னெவனோ தெய்ய

*emarum vēṭṭam pukkanar. ataṇāl*

*taṅkin evaṇō teyya*

our-they(h.) hunt they-entered. therefore

stay-if what<sup>ō</sup>

“All our people have entered the hunt. Therefore,

what if you stayed?”

## 14. Negation

Old Tamil knows no less than six distinct forms of negation. It is not clear whether they are vestiges of older regional forms or whether there are fine semantic distinctions between them which remain elusive today. There were two verbs of negation to begin with; the difference between them was clear-cut since one negated quality and the other negated existence, but the border between them became blurred in the course of time:

அல் *al*, “not to be so” (complementary to இரு *iru* “to be present”)

இல் *il*, “not to be” (complementary to உள் *ul* “to exist”)

Derived from இல் *il* there is an indeclinable form இல்லை *illai*, “not”, valid for all persons, attested already, if rarely, in the *Caṅkam* corpus and the main negation form surviving until today. All other forms are inflected. With one exception negation does not mark aspect or tense. The simplest form of negative is the mere verbal root, without aspectual suffix, followed directly by the pronominal ending for person and number. The same can be done with the negative stem (செய்யாது *ceyyātu*). Next, the negative verbal root அல் *al* can be added between the verbal root and the pronominal suffix. The use of இல் *il* is more difficult to describe. To begin with, it was employed in several subtypes of nominal negation, denoting people who are without something. There also was an additional construction of perfective aspect plus இல் *il* followed by a pronominal suffix, more frequent from early bhakti on; however, the aspect does not appear to influence semantics. Finally, for the cases where it seemed important to mark aspect, tense or mood, there was a double verb form consisting of an ordinary positive finite verb followed by the corresponding form of அல் *al*. With negative forms the distinction between finite form and participial noun is almost totally absent;

all forms are ambiguous, except for those that make use of pronominal endings with the vowel ஒ/ஓ *o/ō*.

- |                                |                                   |  |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| (1. இல்லை <i>illai</i>         | “not”                             | up to modern Tamil)                                      |
| 2. zero suffix                 | v.r.-pron.suff.                   | அறியேன் <i>ariyēn</i> , “I don’t know”                   |
| 3. negative stem               | v.r.- <i>ā</i> -pron.suff.        | ஓவாது <i>ōvātu</i> , “it does not stop”                  |
| 4. -அல் <i>-al</i> as a suffix | v.r.- <i>al</i> -pron.suff.       | காணலர் <i>kāṇalar</i> , “they don’t see” <sup>32</sup>   |
| 5. -இல் <i>-il</i> as a suffix | perf. stem- <i>il</i> -pron.suff. | கொண்டிலை <i>koṇṭilai</i> , “you do not take” (late)      |
| 6. double verb forms           | positive + negative form          | ஒள்வாள் அல்லள் <i>olvāl allal</i> , “she will not agree” |

For type 2 in the third person there is a marked preference for forms with -ஆ *-ā* before the ending (செய்யான் *ceyyān*, செய்யார் *ceyyār*), which might be analysed in two ways, namely either as a verbal root plus pronominal suffix, to which the rarer alternative would be செய்யன் *ceyyan*, etc., or, tentatively, as a short negative stem செய்யா *ceyyā* plus just a pronominal ending -ன் *-n*, that is, as an intermediate form between type 2 and 3. Note that type 3 is mostly restricted to negative neuter singular and plural and to negative participial nouns: அறியாதோர் *ariyātōr*, “those who do not know”. The mere negative stem is one of the most ambiguous forms that exist: செய்யா *ceyyā* corresponds to neg. *pey*. (“who does

<sup>32</sup> A variant form with -(க்)கல் *-(k)kal* instead of -அல்(ல்) *-al(l)* is fairly well attested in the *Kalittokai*: அறிகல்லாய் *arikkallāy*, “you don’t know” (Kali 47.17).

not do”), neg. abs. (“not having done”), negative n.sg. (“it does/did not do”) and negative n.pl. (“they do/did not do”).

இல்லை *illai*:

KT 25.1 யாரு மில்லை *yārum illai*  
who<sup>um</sup> not “Nobody is there.”

zero suffix:

KT 200.4 மறந்தோர் மன்ற மறவா நாமே  
*marantōr manra maravāṁ nāmē*  
forgot-he(h.)<sup>manra</sup> forget-not-we we<sup>ē</sup>  
“He has forgotten indeed. We, we won’t forget.”

neg. stem, long (more often neg. part.n.):

KT 6.4 ஓர்யான் மன்ற துஞ்சா தேனே  
*ōr yāṅ manra tuñcāṭēṅē*  
one I<sup>manra</sup> sleep-not-I<sup>ē</sup>  
“I alone, indeed, am one who does not sleep.”

neg. stem, short, for n.sg.:

KT 254.2df.+7 கோங்கின்  
தலையலர் வந்தன வாரா தோழி ...  
எய்தின ராலென வருஉந் தாதே.  
*kōṅkiṅ*  
*talai alar vantaṅa vārā tōḷi ...*  
*eytiṅarāl eṅa varūṁ tūtē.*  
Kōṅku<sup>in</sup>  
head blossom they-came(n.pl.) not-come-it friend  
he-reached(h.)<sup>al</sup> say(inf.) coming- messenger<sup>ē</sup>.  
“The first Kōṅku buds have come. Not come, friend,

has the messenger who comes to say [our man] has reached.”

neg. stem, short, for n.pl.:

KT 261.5f. என்கண் | துஞ்சா வாழி தோழி  
*eṇ kaṇ | tuñcā vāḷi tōḷi*  
 my- eye | sleep-not-they(n.pl.) live(sub.) friend  
 “My eyes don’t sleep, o friend.”

verbal root -அல் *-al* as a negative suffix:

KT 290.1f. காமத் தாங்குமதி யென்போர் தாமஃ  
 தறியலர் கொல்லோ வனைமது கையர்கொல்  
*kāmam tāṅkumati eṇpōr tām aḷ*  
*aṛiyalar-kollō aṇai matukaiyar-kol*  
 desire bear(ipt.) say-they(h.) they(pl.) that  
 know-not-they(h.)<sup>kollō</sup> such strength-they(h.)<sup>kol</sup>  
 “Those who say ‘bear desire’, do they not  
 know it? Are they that strong?”

Here there are two *Caṅkam* examples for the negative verbal root -இல் *-il*, first on a verbal root, then on a perfective stem as is fairly normal from bhakti times onwards:

KT 113.3f. இரைதேர் வெண்குரு கல்லது யாவதுந்  
 துன்னல்போ கின்றாற் பொழிலே  
*irai tēr veḷ kuruk<sub>u</sub> allatu yāvatum*  
*tunnal pōkiṅrāl polilē*  
 prey search- white egret except anything  
 approaching go-not-it<sup>al</sup> grove<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Nothing except the white egret searching for prey

will go near the grove.”

(lit. “anything other than the egret will not go”)

Pari 9.25 ஆய்வந்திலர் *āyvantilar*  
research-not-they(h.) “The don’t research.”

There are rare occurrences too of a negative present tense – unclear, again, whether with temporal impact or not:

TVM 7.7.5.4 ஒன்று மறிகின்றிலே னன்னைமீ ரெனக்குய் விடமே  
*onrum arikinrilēn annaimīr enakk<sub>u</sub> uyv<sub>u</sub> iṭamē*  
one<sup>um</sup> know-not-I mother(2.pl.) me(dat.) escaping  
place<sup>ē</sup>  
“I don’t know of any place, mothers – for me to  
escape to.”

### Special Constructions with -இல் -il

negation of action (expressed verbal noun):

KT 168.6 மணத்தலுந் தணத்தலு மிலமே  
*maṇattalum taṇattalum ilamē*  
uniting<sup>um</sup> departing<sup>um</sup> not-we<sup>ē</sup>  
“We can neither unite nor depart.”  
(lit. “we are without uniting or departing”)

negation of quality:

NA 143.6 வழுவில ளம்ம தானே *valu ilaḷ-amma tānē*  
fault not-she<sup>amma</sup> self<sup>ē</sup> “she, alas, is without fault.”

negation of fact:

NA 193.5 தீதறிந் தன்றோ விலமே *tī<sub>u</sub> arintanrō ilamē*  
evil-it it-knew<sup>ō</sup> not-we<sup>ē</sup> “We did not know of any evil.”  
(lit. “we were without knowing...”)

nominalisation:

KT 93.4 புலவியஃ தெவனோ வன்பிலங் கடையே  
*pulavi akt<sub>u</sub> evanō anp<sub>u</sub> ilam-katāiyē*  
 sulking that what<sup>o</sup> love not-we(loc.)<sup>e</sup>  
 “What is that, sulking – in us who are without love?”

KT 115.6 நன்மலை நாட நின்னல திலளே  
*nal malai nāṭa niṅ alatu ilalē*  
 good mountain land-he(voc.) you- not-so-it not-she<sup>e</sup>  
 “Man from a land of good mountains, without you she  
 does not exist.”

Probably an isolated case is an impersonal construction with இலம்  
*ilam* instead of இல்லை *illai*:

TV 31.1 தூதென் றிசைத்தா லிசையிலம்  
*tūt<sub>u</sub> enru icaittāl icai ilam*  
 messenger said speak-if speak-absence  
 “If [I] speak ‘speak as [my] messenger!’ there is no  
 speaking.”

Double verb forms with -அல் *-al*

negation of quality with a pronominalised noun:

KT 47.4 நல்லை யல்லை நெடுவெண் ணிலவே  
*nallai allai neṭu veḷ nilavē*  
 good-you not-so-you long white moonlight<sup>e</sup>  
 “You are no good, long white moonlight.”

past tense negation:

AN 98.6 அறிந்தன ளல்ல ளன்னை *arintanaḷ allaḷ annai*  
 she-knew not-so-she mother “Mother did not know.”

verbal negation with a neg. v.n. as direct object:

- NA 376.11f. வறும்புனங் காவல் விடாமை  
யறிந்தனி ரல்லிரோ வறனில் யாயே  
*varum puṇam kāval viṭāmai*  
*arintaṇir allirō aran il yāyē*  
poor field guarding letting-not  
you-knew(pl.) not-so-you(pl.)<sup>o</sup> duty- not- mother<sup>e</sup>  
“Haven’t you understood that [our] virtueless  
mother won’t let [us] guard the empty field?”

-அல் *-al* with a subjunctive:

- KT 224.6 துயர்பொறுக் கல்லேன் *tuyar porukk<sub>u</sub> allēṇ*  
misery I-bear(sub.) I-not-so “I cannot bear the  
misery.”

Negative double verb forms allow for (multiple) rhetoric ambiguity:

- KT 52.5 பரிந்தனெ னல்லனோ  
*parintaṇeṇ allāṇō*  
I-sympathized not-so-I<sup>o</sup>/no-so-he<sup>o</sup>  
“Did I not sympathise?”  
or “I sympathised, did I not?”  
or “I sympathised, did he not?”

A double negation is to be understood as an emphatic positive:

- KT 244.3 கேளே மல்லேம். கேட்டனம் பெரும  
*kēlēṁ allēm. kēṭṭaṇam peruma*  
hear-not-we not-so-we we-heard great-one(voc.)  
“‘It is not that we did not hear. We heard, great one.’”



## 15a. Double Verb Forms, *Murreccam*, Complex Verb Forms

Old Tamil knows a considerable variety of complex verb forms, both in the sense of lexical compound verbs and of auxiliary constructions. These usually consist of a nonfinite item (noun or verb) followed by a finite item. Apart from those there are a number of exceptions to the rule of having only one finite verb per sentence. First, there is the possibility of insertions; these usually consist in *verba dicendi/sentiendi* (cf. p. 132f.) and in optatives or imperatives. Double verb forms, that is, two finite verbs following directly upon each other, occur with the negatives (see Chapter 14), with emphatic verbs of existence (இருதல் *irutal*/உள்-தல் *uḷ-tal*/ஆகுதல் *ākutal*) and with some exceptional constructions, for example with செல்-தல் *cel-tal*, later also வருதல் *varutal*. Moreover there is the *murreccam* (“what demands a finite verb as a complement”), a construction where a finite verb is integrated somewhere in the clause but understood as nonfinite.

insertion of *verbum dicendi*:

KT 12.4      கவலைத் தென்ப வவர்சென்ற வாரே  
*kavalaitt<sub>u</sub> enpa avar cenra āre*  
crossroad-it they-say he(h.)- gone- way<sup>ē</sup>  
“It has crossroads, they say, the way he has gone.”

insertion of optative:

KT 19.3      இனைமதி வாழிய நெஞ்சே  
*inaimati vāliya neñcē*  
despair(ipt.) may-live heart<sup>ē</sup>  
“Despair, may you live, heart!”

An added verb of existence, especially if it does not agree in number and gender with the main verb, can indicate an emphatic presence, if it is in agreement with the main verb, it may also signify a change of state. In such cases one might take the main verb as a participial noun:

Pū 20.1f.                      பல்காலு நினை  
வழிவாழ்வார் வாழ்வரா மாதோ  
*pal kālum niṅṅai*  
*vali vālvār vālvār ām-mātō*  
many time<sup>um</sup> you(acc.)  
way live-they(h.) live-they(h.) becoming-it<sup>mātō</sup>  
“Is it not<sup>33</sup> that those who walk (lit. live) you as the path  
for a long time, shall live?”

NA 128.3                      எனக்குநீ யுரையா யாயினை  
*eṇakku nī uraiyāy āyiṅṅai*  
me(dat.) you talk-not-you you-became  
“You have become one that does not talk to me.”  
or “It is the case that you don’t talk to me.”

The special construction with செல்/வரு *cel/varu* seems to express an exhortation:

KT 198.5                      படுகிளி கடிகஞ் சேறும்  
*paṭu kiḷi kaṭikam cērum*  
happen- parakeet we-chase we-go  
“Let us go and chase parakeets that come down [into  
the millet].”

<sup>33</sup> Here the negation is an attempt at rendering the flavour of the particle -மாதோ *-mātō*, politely suggesting that something is the case.

*murreccam* with aspectual impact:

KT 275.2 கண்டனம் வருகஞ் சென்மோ தோழி  
*kaṇṭanam varukam cenmō tōli*  
 we-saw we-come go! friend  
 “Up! Let us come [back] after we have seen, friend.”

AN 398.20f. பல்பூங் கானத் தல்கி யின்றிவண்  
 சேர்ந்தனை செலினே சிதைகுவ துண்டோ  
*pal pūm kāṇatt<sub>u</sub> alki inr<sub>u</sub> ivan*  
*cērtanai celinē citaikuvat<sub>u</sub> uṇṭō*  
 many flower forest- abided today here  
 you-joined go-if<sup>e</sup> being-wasted-it it-is<sup>o</sup>  
 “If you were to go after joining [us] here today, abiding  
 in the forest with many flowers, would there be [any]  
 harm?”

epic *murreccam* with an infinitive for a following change of subject:

Cilap 12.53 விருந்தின் மூர லரும்பின ணிற்ப  
*viruntin mūral arumpinaḷ nirpa*  
 feast<sup>in</sup> smile budded-she stand(inf.)  
 “while she stood, as one who broke out in a smile like a  
 feast”

*murreccam* for rhetorical effect:

NA 373.3f. மைப்படு மால்வரை பாடினள் கொடிச்சி  
 யைவன வெண்ணெற் குறுஉ நாடன்  
*mai paṭu māl varai pāṭinaḷ koṭicci*  
*aivanam veḷ nel kurūum nāṭan*  
 kohl happen- big mountain she-sang creeper-she  
 wild-rice white paddy pounding- land-he

“the man from a land, where the creeper woman pounds white paddy, singing about the cloud-covered big mountain”

### Compound Verbs

The simplest type of compound verb combines an adverb or a noun with a verbal root. While a compound of verb and adverb often can be understood on the basis of its etymology, a verb compounded with a noun can be employed in order to intensify the meaning of the basic verb or can be semantically productive. Many compound verbs are lexicalised but by no means all of them, and with some of them the meaning depends on the context. The verbal class remains that of the simplex. The “prepositions” compounded with verbs are மேல் *mēl*, “upon”; கீழ் *kīl*, “beneath”; முன் *mun*, “before”; பின் *pin*, “after”; உடன் *uṭan*, “along with”; உள் *uḷ*, “inside”; எதிர் *etir*, “opposite”; வெளி *veḷi*, “outside”. The most frequent nouns are basic words for body parts such as தலை *talai*, “head”, கை *kai*, “hand”, புறம் *puram*, “back”, but see the following (incomplete) list of examples:

|                                 |                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| எதிர்கொள் <i>etir-kol</i>       | 2. “to receive”            |
| வெளிப்படு <i>veḷi-p-paṭu</i>    | 6. “to come out”           |
| ஆற்றுப்படு <i>ārru-p-paṭu</i>   | 11. “to bring on the way”  |
| கண்படு <i>kaṇ-paṭu</i>          | 6. “to close one’s eyes”   |
| தலைப்பிரி <i>talai-p-piri</i>   | 4. “to separate”           |
| புறந்தா <i>puram-tā</i>         | 13. “to protect; to defy”  |
| வழி(ப்)படு <i>vaḷi-(p)-paṭu</i> | 6. “to follow, to worship” |

A small group of verbs, in the early time most frequently உறுதல் *urūtal*, “to experience”, may function as verbalisers by incorporating a noun, occasionally lexicalised: இன்புறுதல் *inpu-urūtal*, “to feel pleasure”; காமுறுதல் *kāmu-urūtal*, “to desire” (contracted and lexicalised from காமம் உறுதல் *kāmam urūtal*); அலம்வருதல் *alam-*

*varutal* and அலமருதல் *alamarutal*, “to be agitated” (lexicalised in both the uncontracted and the contracted form).

In this context the phenomenon of spontaneous noun incorporation should be mentioned, frequent especially in devotional and epic Tamil and recognisable by an accusative mark where a genitive would be expected:

Kul 1.4.1 மாவினை வாய்பிளந்து *māvinai vāy-piḷantu*  
 horse(acc.) mouth ripped “mouth-ripping the horse”  
 ~ “ripping the mouth of the horse”

Compounds of two verbs also exist, such as போதருதல் *pōtarutal*, “to come”; மேவருதல் *mēvarutal*, “to be fitted for” (contracted from மேவு-வருதல் *mēvu-varutal*), but there are cases where it is difficult to distinguish between a verbal compound and an auxiliary construction.

As in any language, there are also a number of verbs that take verbal complements, in which case there is a frequent variation between the infinitive and various forms of the verbal noun, occasionally also with the absolutive. Some of them are:

|                          |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| அயர்தல் <i>ayartal</i>   | 4. “to be engaged in”         |
| ஆ(கு)தல் <i>ā(ku)tal</i> | 13. “to be possible” (bhakti) |
| ஆற்றுதல் <i>ārrutal</i>  | 5. “to bear”                  |
| இசைதல் <i>icaital</i>    | 4. “to be possible”           |
| இயறல் <i>iyal-tal</i>    | 3. “to befall”                |
| இயைதல் <i>iyaital</i>    | 4. “to be agreeable”          |
| உவத்தல் <i>uvattal</i>   | 12. “to rejoice”              |
| எய்தல் <i>eytal</i>      | 11. “to grow weary”           |
| ஒல்லுதல் <i>ollutal</i>  | 5. “to be possible”           |

|                               |                               |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ஒழிதல் <i>olital</i>          | 5. “to stay behind, to cease” |
| ஓவுதல் <i>ōvutal</i>          | 5. “to stop”                  |
| குறித்தல் <i>kurittal</i>     | 11. “to intend”               |
| கூடுதல் <i>kūṭutal</i>        | 5. “to be appropriate”        |
| செல்லா/போகா <i>cellā/pōkā</i> | 3./13. “not to be possible”   |
| துடங்குதல் <i>tuṭaṅkūtal,</i> |                               |
| தொடங்குதல் <i>toṭaṅkūtal</i>  | 5. “to begin”                 |
| பிழைத்தல் <i>pilaittal</i>    | 11. “to fail”                 |
| மறுத்தல் <i>maruttal</i>      | 11. “to refuse”               |
| மாட்டா <i>māṭṭā</i>           | 5. neg. “not to be able”      |
| வல்லுதல் <i>vallutal</i>      | 5. “to be capable, to master” |
| வேண்டுகுதல் <i>vēṇṭutal</i>   | 5. “to be necessary”          |

## 15b. Auxiliaries

Old Tamil already has a complicated system of auxiliary verbs. Some of them are still employed in the same function in modern Tamil, most notably the auxiliaries for passive and middle voices, but the majority is transitory; in fact each period and often each genre has certain favoured constructions. Not much useful work has been done in this area, and the following can only be counted as a few preliminary remarks and observations. The three most frequent nonfinite forms that enter into an auxiliary construction are the verbal root, the infinitive, and the absolute, but we also find the verbal noun in *-tal*.

Auxiliaries that more or less seem to vanish after the *Caṅkam* corpus:

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| v.r. + கிற்றல் <i>kil-tal</i> | “to be able to”                               |
| v.r. + வருதல் <i>varutal</i>  | starting an action                            |
| abs. + உறைதல் <i>uraital</i>  | remaining in a stable state                   |
| abs. + அமைதல் <i>amaital</i>  | reaching a new stability                      |
| [abs. + ஈதல் <i>ītal</i>      | benefactive: already frozen into imperatives] |

Auxiliaries that start in or continue into later Old Tamil:

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| v.r. + தருதல் <i>tarutal</i> | an action outside the control of the speaker or moving towards the speaker (since <i>Caṅkam</i> , prevailing, though ignored by the tradition) |
|------------------------------|--|

செய்யா *ceyyā* abs.

+ நின்றல் *nil-tal* continuous form<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Both ஒழுகுதல் *olukutal*, “to flow” and இருதல் *irutal*, “to be”, have to be regarded as less successful predecessors of *nil-tal* for the continuous form; both

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| abs. + அருளுதல் <i>aruḷutal</i> | general benefactive (bhakti)                   |
| abs. + இடுதல் <i>iṭutal</i>     | completion of an action ( <i>Kīlkkāṇakku</i> ) |
| விடுதல் <i>viṭutal</i>          | completion of an action (late <i>Caṅkam</i> )  |
| abs. + போகுதல் <i>pōkutal</i>   | concluding an action with negative outcome     |
| v.n. + உறுதல் <i>urūtal</i>     | beginning or undertaking of an action          |

Auxiliaries that appear to be fairly stable:

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| inf. + படுதல் <i>paṭutal</i>  | passive (stray occurrences already in <i>Caṅkam</i> ) <sup>35</sup> |
| abs. + கொண்டல் <i>koḷ-tal</i> | middle voice (stray occurrences already in <i>Caṅkam</i> )          |

கிற்றல் *kil-tal*, “to be able to”:

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| KT 22.1f. | நீயிவ னொழிய   யாரோ பிரிகிற் பவரே<br><i>nī ivaṇ oḷiya   yārō piri-kirpavarē</i><br>you here stay-behind(inf.)   who(h.) <sup>5</sup> separate- able-<br>he(h.) <sup>6</sup><br>“Who will be able to separate while you stay behind?” |
|-----------|---|

வருதல் *varutal* (inchoative/inceptive; onset of an action):

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| NA 298.5 | அருஞ்சுரங் கவலை யஞ்சுவரு நனந்தலை<br><i>arum curam kavalai aṅcu varum naṇam talai</i><br>difficult desert crossroad fear- coming- wide place<br>“the vast area where the crossroads in the difficult<br>desert become frightening” |
|----------|---|

---

are occasionally found, preceded by an absolutive, from the *Caṅkam* corpus onwards.

<sup>35</sup> In the bhakti period, infinitive plus உறுதல் *urūtal* can rarely be found as a passive construction instead of infinitive + படுதல் *paṭutal*.



உறைதல் *uraital* for remaining in a stable state:

KT 65.4 வாரா துறையுநர் வரனசைஇ  
*vārāt<sub>u</sub> uraiyunar varal nacaii*  
 come-not staying-he(h.) coming longed-for  
 “longing for the coming of him who stays away”

அமைதல் *amaital* for reaching a new (stable?) state:

KT 137.2-4 நிற்றுறந் துமைகுவெ னாயி னெற்றுறந்  
 திரவலர் வாரா வைகல்  
 பல வாகுக  
*niṅ turant<sub>u</sub> amaikuveṅ āyīn eṅ turantu*  
*iravalār vārā vaikal*  
*pala ākuka*  
 you- abandoned I-become-quiet if my- abandoned  
 beggar(h.) come-not day  
 many(n.pl.) may-become  
 “If I were to abandon you completely,  
 may the days the beggars abandon me [and] don’t come  
 become many.”

தருதல் *tarutal* for an action outside of the control of the speaker:

KT 95.1 மால்வரை யிழிதருந் தூவெள் ளருவி  
*māl varai iḷi-tarum tū veḷ aruvi*  
 big mountain fall-giving- purity white waterfall  
 “the pure white waterfall that tumbles from the tall  
 mountain”

continuous form with செய்யாநிற்றல் *ceyyā + nil-tal*:

Poy 43.1+4 மனமாசு தீரு மருவினையுஞ் சாரா ...

தாந்தொழா நிற்பார் தமர்

*maṇam ācu tīrum aru viṇaiyum cārā ...*

*tām tolā-nirpār tamar*

mind blemish end-it difficult karma approach-not-it

they(pl.) worship-stand-they(h.) his-people(h.)

“Blemishes of the mind will end, and difficult karma will not approach those of his people who keep worshipping.”

[Here a rare example of a *Caṅkam* predecessor to the continuous with another type of absolutive:

NA 242.10 தேடுஉ நின்ற விரலை யேறே *tēṭūu-ninra iralai ērē*

sought stood- Iralai stag

“the Iralai stag that kept seeking”]

அருளுதல் *aruḷutal* as a benefactive:

Tē 7.70.4.4 எனையஞ்சலென்றருளாய்

*enai aṅcal enr<sub>u</sub>-aruḷāy*

me(acc.) don't-fear said grace(ipt.)

“Graciously tell me “do not be afraid!”

இடுதல் *iṭutal* for the completion of an action:

TVM 6.2.7.1f. கடன்ஞால முண்டிட்ட | நின்மலா

*kaṭal ṅālam uṇṭ<sub>u</sub>-iṭṭa | ninmalā*

sea world eaten-placed | spotless-one(m.voc.)

“o spotless one who has eaten up the ocean[-girded] world”

விடுதல் *viṭutal* for the completion of an action:<sup>36</sup>

Kali 94.44f. துகடர்பு காட்சி யவையத்தா ரோலை

முகடு காப்பு யாத்து விட்டாங்கு

*tukaḷ tīrpu kāṭci avaiyattār olai*

*mukaṭu kāppu yāttu-viṭṭāṅku*

dust ended sight assembly-they(h.) palm-leaf

top guarding tied-let(abs.)-like

“like a palm-leaf of the insight[ful scholars] of the assembly,  
firmly tied with the top protection after the dust is wiped off”

போகுதல் *pōkutal* for the completion of an action with negative outcome:

Pēy 74.1f.

நஞ்சூட்டு வன்பேய்

நிலமே புரண்டுபோய் வீழ

*nañcū ūṭṭu val pēy*

*nilamē puraṇṭu-pōy vīḷa*

poison fed strong demoness

ground<sup>e</sup> rolled-gone fall(inf.)

“so that the strong demoness, having fed [him] poison,  
fell to the ground, rolling in contortions”

படுதல் *paṭutal* for the passive:

KT 288.5 இனிதெனப் படுஉம் புத்தே ணாடே

*iṇitū eṇa-p-paṭūum puttēḷ nāṭē*

pleasant-it say(inf.) it-happens god land<sup>e</sup>

“The land of the gods is called pleasant.”

<sup>36</sup> Clear examples for *viṭutal* as an auxiliary are difficult to find in the early period, except in similes such as this, attested since the early anthologies (cf. KT 168.3 *viṭiyal virittu-viṭṭanna*, “as if dusk had spread”).

[passive with உறுதல் *uratal* instead of படுதல் *paṭutal*:

Cilap 12.13.1 சீறா ரொருமகனா னிரைகொள்ள வுற்ற காலை  
*cīru ūr oru makaṇāṇ nirai koḷḷa-urra-kālai*  
 little village son(inst.) herd take(Inf.)-experienced-time  
 “at the time the herd was taken by one man from the  
 little village”]

கொள்-தல் *koḷ-tal* for middle voice:

Poy 36.4 மண்ணிரந்து கொண்ட வகை  
*maṇ irantu-koṇṭa vakai*  
 earth begged-taken manner  
 “the way that he (Vāmana) took the earth for himself”

TVM 9.4.8.4 கண்ணனைக் கண்டு கொண்டேனே

*kaṇṇanai kaṇṭu-koṇṭēṇē*  
 Kaṇṇan(acc.) seen-taken-I<sup>e</sup>  
 “I have for myself seen Kaṇṇan.”

உறுதல் *uratal* for the beginning or undertaking of an action:

Tē 4.34.6 நீள்வரை எடுக்கல் உற்றான்  
 தோள்முடி நெரிய வைத்தார் தொல்மறைக்காடனார்  
*nīḷ varai eṭukkal urrāṇ*  
*tōḷ muṭi neriya vaittār tol maraikkāṭaṇār*  
 “the one from ancient Maraikkāṭu (Śiva) put down [his  
 toe] in order to crush head [and] shoulders of the one who  
 undertook to lift [his] tall mountain (i.e., Rāvaṇa)”

## SYNTAX

### 16. Particles and Word Order: -ē as a Full Stop and as Rhetorical Mark

The observation of syntactical patterns reveals the distribution of particles (cf. chapter 1.7, p. 56): the majority are found in main sentences, not in subordinate phrases [Wilden 2006]. These are patterns fairly strictly observed (though not without deviation) in the early *Caṅkam* texts. Afterwards things start to disintegrate: already in the *Aiṅkurunūru* constructions may be found that would not be possible in the *Kuruntokai*, and by the time of the *Kuraḷ* confusion prevails. [Note: this is also true of the *sūtra*-s in the theoretical texts (why?).]

The end of a sentence, i.e., a full stop, used to be marked by the particle -ḥ -ē. Main sentences may be verbal and nominal clauses, including exclamations and forms of address. Subordinate clauses comprise absolutive, infinitive, *peyareccam*, verbal root, conditional, concessive, causal, comparison, and embedded constructions (which can evidently contain other main sentences marked by particles, though rarely by -ḥ -ē, since the sentence-final function is taken over by the embedding verb or particle). Exceptions to particle marking are made for finite verb forms that are unambiguous such as the imperative or optative, negative forms (which consequently often cause problems, since they mostly do not distinguish finite verb from participial noun anyway) and also double verb forms. An exception for rhetorical purposes is a sentence beginning with the predicate; the end of a poem (depending on the metre) is always marked with a particle. A similar exception is the poetic subtype beginning with an aphoristic prelude, usually not marked by a particle. Sentence-final -ḥ -ē can be accompanied or substituted by a vocative (since the vocative for most nouns does not have a separate form, it can be marked by -ḥ -ē).

The basic distribution patterns account for “normal” word order and various types of focalisation:

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| normal word order:                      | S O P(= f.v./pr.n.)-ē |
| postposition of subject:                | O P S-ē               |
| postposition of object:                 | S P O-ē               |
| postposition of adverb:                 | S O P adv.-ē          |
| focalisation:                           |                       |
| focalisation of subject:                | S-ē O P(-ē)           |
| anteposition of object:                 | [O-ē P S] rare        |
| anteposition of adverb:                 | [adv.-ē O P S] rare   |
| anteposition of predicate (closed):     | [O] P-ē S-ē           |
| anteposition of predicate (open-ended): | [O] P-ē S             |
| address:                                | N-ē                   |

S O P-ē verbal sentence:

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| KT 13.3f. | நாட   னோய்தந் தனனே தோழி<br><i>nāṭaṅ   nōy tantanaṅē tōḷi</i><br>land-he   pain he-gave <sup>ē</sup> friend<br>“The man from the land gave pain, friend.” |
|-----------|--|

S O P-ē nominal sentence:

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| KT 35.5 | வாடையும் பிரிந்திசினோர்க் கழலே<br><i>vāṭaiyum pirinticinōrkk, aḷalē</i><br>north wind <sup>um</sup> separated-they(dat.) fire <sup>ē</sup><br>“Even the north wind is fire to those who are separated.” |
|---------|---|

S O P with an imperative not marked by a particle:

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| KT 2.1f. | தும்பி   காமஞ் செப்பாது கண்டது மொழிமோ<br><i>tumpi   kāmaṅ ceppātu kaṅṭatu moḷimō</i> |
|----------|--|

bee | desire say-not seen-it speak

“O bee, speak of what you have seen without speaking according to [my] desire.”

S O P double verb form not marked by a particle:

KT 80.3 யாமஃ தயர்கஞ் சேறும்  
*yām aḥt<sub>u</sub> ayarkam cērum*  
 we that immerse(1.pl.sub.) go(1.pl.sub.)  
 “Let us go immerse ourselves in that.”

O P S-ē subject postposition:

KT 170.4f. மலைகெழு நாடன் கேண்மை  
 தலைபோ காமைநற் கறிந்தனென் யானே  
*malai kelu nāṭan kēṇmai*  
*talaipōkāmai nark<sub>u</sub> arintanen yānē*  
 mountain have- land-he intimacy  
 not-having-come-to-an-end well I-knew I<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Me, I knew well that the intimacy with the man from  
 a land having mountains had not come to an end.”

S P O-ē object postposition:

KT 50.5 புலம்பணிந் தன்றவர் மணந்த தோளே  
*pulamp<sub>u</sub> aṇintan<sub>r<sub>u</sub></sub> avar maṇanta tōlē*  
 loneliness it-adorned he(h.) united- shoulder<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Loneliness has come to adorn the shoulder he united  
 with.”

S O P adv.-ē adverb postposition:

KT 14.6 யா நாணுகஞ் சிறிதே  
*yām nāṇukam ciritē*

we be-ashamed(1.pl.sub.) small-it<sup>ē</sup>  
 “We may be ashamed, a little.”

S-ē O P-ē subject focalisation (emphasis):

KT 24.5f. ... கொடியோர் நாவே  
 காதல ரகலக் கல்லென் றவ்வே  
 ... *koṭiyōr nāvē*  
*kātalar akala kallenṛavē*  
 cruel-they tongue<sup>ē</sup>  
 lover(h.) depart(inf.) ‘kal’-said(n.pl.)<sup>ē</sup>  
 “The tongues of the cruel ones,  
 they foretold that the lover would depart.”

O-ē P S anteposition of the direct object (rare):

KT 73.1 மகிழ்நன் மார்பே வெய்யை யானீ  
*makiḷnan mārpē veyyaiyāl nī*  
 delight-he chest<sup>ē</sup> hot-you<sup>al</sup> you  
 “On the delightful man’s chest you are keen indeed.”

O-ē P S anteposition of the indirect object (rare):

KT 140.3 சுரனே சென்றனர் காதலர்  
*curanē cenṛanar kātalar*  
 desert<sup>ē</sup> he-went(h.) lover(h.)  
 “To the desert the lover has gone.”

P-ē S-ē predicate anteposition (strong emphasis):

KT 112.4f. அற்றே | கண்டிசின் றோழியவ ருண்டவென் னலனே  
*arrē | kaṇṭicin tōli avar uṇṭa eṇ nalanē*  
 thus-it<sup>ē</sup> | see(ipt.) friend he(h.) eaten- my- innocence<sup>ē</sup>



“Just like that – look, friend – is my innocence, which he had eaten.”

P-ē S predicate anteposition without particle to mark the end of the sentence, i.e., the sentence goes on by coordination:

KT 113.1f. ஊர்க்கு மணித்தே பொய்கை பொய்கைக்குச்  
சேய்த்து மன்றே சிறுகான் யாறே  
*ūrkkum aṇittē poykai poykaikku*  
*cēyttum anrē ciru kān yārē*  
village(dat.)<sup>um</sup> close-it<sup>ē</sup> pond pond(dat.)  
distance-it<sup>um</sup> is-not-so<sup>ē</sup> little forest river<sup>ē</sup>  
“Not far from the village is the pond, and from the pond  
the little forest river is not distant.”

P-ē S predicate anteposition as a rhetorical device, when the subject is part of the next sentence too:

KT 92.2,5 அளிய தாமே கொடுஞ்சிறைப் பறவை ...  
இரைகொண் டமையின் விரையுமாற் செலவே  
*aḷiya tāme koṭuṁ cirai paravai ...*  
*irai koṇṭamaiyiṅ viraiyumāl celavē*  
pity-they(n.pl.) self(pl.)<sup>ē</sup> curved wing bird ...  
food having-taken<sup>in</sup> they-hurry(n.p.)<sup>ai</sup> going<sup>ē</sup>  
“Pitiful are they, the bent-winged birds,  
in a hurry indeed in [their] going since they have taken  
food...”

S-ē = address:

KT 23.1-3 அகவன் மகளே யகவன் மகளே  
மனவுகோப் பன்ன நன்னெடுங் கூந்த  
லகவன் மகளே

*akaval makaḷē akaval makaḷē*  
*maṇavu kōpp<sub>u</sub> aṇṇa nal neṭum kūntal*  
*akaval makaḷē*

Akaval woman<sup>ē</sup> Akaval woman<sup>ē</sup>  
 chank-bead string like good long tresses

Akaval woman<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Soothsaying woman, soothsaying woman,  
 with good long tresses [white] as strings of chank bead,  
 soothsaying woman!”

A rare exception in the old corpus is -ஏ -ē in a subordinate phrase,  
 here attached to the absolutive:

KT 52.2      சூர்நசைந் தனையையாய் நடுங்கல் கண்டே  
*cūr nacaintaṇaiyai āy naṭuṅkal kaṇṭē*  
 fearful-spirit longed-for-thus-you become(abs.)  
 trembling seen<sup>ē</sup>  
 “seeing [you] tremble as one longed for by a spirit”

## 17. Modal Particles

In early *Caṅkam* Tamil, particles are employed also to express modality. Usually they work in coordination with -ஏ -ē. The interrogative particles -கொல் -*kol*, -ஓ -*ō* and கொல்லோ *kollō* have already been treated in Chapter 11. In Chapter 1.7 there is a list of particles, which is not complete and does not list the various particle combinations that are possible. For many of them no hypothesis as to their function has been ventured so far; some are not attested in a number sufficient to form a hypothesis.<sup>37</sup> Some of the more important particles that seem fairly comprehensible are:

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| மன் <i>maṅ</i>     | assertive with shades of evaluation; irrealis                        |
| மன்ற <i>maṅra</i>  | assertive with shades of evaluation                                  |
| ஆல் <i>āl</i>      | assertive with shades of evaluation                                  |
| அம்ம <i>amma</i>   | lament; inviting attention   |
| தில்ல <i>tilla</i> | wish   |
| தெய்ய <i>teyya</i> | admonition   |
| மாதோ <i>mātō</i>   | particle of emphatically doubtful (rhetorical) question              |
| மற்று <i>marru</i> | adversative/contrastive? (also change of subject, topic/perspective) |

Among the unexplained particles remain the following: அத்தை *attai*, -அரோ -*arō*, -ஆரும் -*ārum*, கொன்- *kon-*, மாள *māla*, யாழ *yāla*. From the middle *Caṅkam* texts onwards the system deteriorates and from the bhakti texts onwards very often the old patterns are no longer heeded and the old functions often do not appear to make sense anymore. However, it is important to bear in mind that

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<sup>37</sup> For கொல் *kol* as an interrogative and மன் *maṅ* and மன்ற *maṅra* as assertive particles see also Sivaraja Pillai 1932, appendices.

particles actually have to be described in two ways. They form syntactic patterns which can easily be demonstrated to exist. The determination of their function, then, is a second step, that may be controversial. The *Tolkāppiyam Collatikāram* contains a chapter on particles, *Itaiyiyal*, which does not describe syntactic patterns and which, in an additive manner, names ways in which particles have been used. The commentators accordingly had the choice of identifying one of those uses in a given passage or of calling the particle “expletive” (அசை *acai*). Notable is, first of all, that the vast majority of particles is either enclitic (if it is shorter than a regular metrical foot) or added in a separate metrical foot (*cīr*) after the predicate or focalised noun. Exceptions are the particle *மற்று marṛu*, which may appear between sentences, and the particle *கொன் kon*, which appears to be proclitic and entered into the dictionaries like a noun with the four functions identified by the *Tolkāppiyam* (TC 249i: அச்சம் *accam*, “fear”, பயமிலி *payamili* “uselessness”, காலம் *kālam*, “time”, பெருமை *perumai*, “greatness”).

Syntactical patterns:

-மன் *-maṇ* (certainty): S PrN/(f.v.)-*maṇ*

postpositions marked by -ஏ *-ē*; combinations: *மன்றில்ல manrilla*,  
*மன்னோ manṇō*, *மன்னே manṇē*

மன்ற *maṇra* (certainty): PrN/(f.v.) *maṇra* S-*ē*

P *maṇra*

combinations: *மன்றம்ம manṛamma*

-ஆல் *-āl* (surprising fact): [O] P-*āl* S-*ē*

focalisation: [S] P-*āl* O-*ē*;

[S] P-*āl* adv.-*ē*

S-*ē* O P-*āl*

O-*ē* P-*āl*

combinations: -ஆலம்ம *-āl-amma*, -ஆற்றில்ல *-āl-illa*

அம்ம *amma* (“alas”): P *amma* S-ē(.)

focalisation in combination: P *maṇr’ amma* S-ē  
P-āl *amma* S

call for attention: அம்ம வாழி தோழி *amma vāli tōli* (?)

தில்ல *tilla* (wish): P(opt./sub.) *tilla*  
 (“would that...!” – desire)  
P(opt./sub.) *tillamma* (“if  
only...!” – irrealis)

தெய்ய *teyya* (admonition): S O P-ē/-ō *teyya* (“please”)

மாதோ *mātō*: S O P-*mātō* (“is it not that...?”)

மற்று *marru*: S-*marru*  
*marru*-S  
(not restricted to the main sentence;  
also in a period; position more  
fluid)

combinations (always on the predicate): மற்றே *marrē*, ஓமற்றே  
*ōmarrē*, மற்றில்ல *marrilla*

Examples:

assertive மன் *maṇ*:

KT 153.3 அஞ்சும னளித்தென் னெஞ்ச மினியே  
*añcum-maṇ aḷitt<sub>u</sub> eṇ neñcam iṇiyē*  
fearing-it<sup>man</sup> pity-it my- heart now<sup>e</sup>  
“Fearful indeed, pitiful is my heart now.”

மன் *maṇ* in combination with நன்று *nanru* for an irrealis:

KT 98.1-3 அவர் | துன்னச் சென்று செப்புநர்ப் பெறினே

நன்றுமன் வாழி தோழி

*avar | tunna cenru ceppunar perinē*

*nanru-man vāli tōli*

he(h.) | approach(inf.) gone saying-he(h.) obtain-if<sup>ē</sup>

good-it<sup>man</sup> live(sub.) friend

“If we were to obtain someone who goes to approach [and] talk to him, that would be good indeed, o friend.”

மன்னே *mannē*:

KT 191.6f.

ஓதியும் புனைய

லெம்முந் தொடாஅ லென்குவெ மன்னே.

*ōtium punaiyal*

*emum toṭāal enkuvem mannē*

hair<sup>um</sup> don't-adorn

us<sup>um</sup> don't-touch we-say<sup>mannē</sup>

“Don't adorn [our] hair

and don't touch us, we shall indeed say.”

மன்னோ *mannō*:

KT 229.4

ஏதில் சிறுசெரு வுறுப மன்னோ

*ēt il ciru cer<sub>u</sub> urupa mannō*

reason-not little quarrel they-have<sup>mannō</sup>

“For sure they have a little quarrel without reason?”

assertive மன்ற *manra*:

KT 35.1

நாணில மன்றவெங் கண்ணே

*nāṇ ila manra em kaṇṇē*

shame not-they(n.pl.)<sup>manra</sup> our- eye<sup>ē</sup>

“Our eyes indeed, they are without shame.”

assertive -*āl*:

- KT 120.2 அரிதுவேட் டனையா னெஞ்சே  
*aritu vēṭṭanaiyāl neñcē*  
 difficult-it wanted-you<sup>āl</sup> heart<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Indeed you wanted something difficult, heart.”

lamentative *amma*:

- KT 45.5 தெறுவ தம்மவித் திணைபிறத் தல்லே  
*teruvat<sub>u</sub> amma i tiṇai piṇattalē*  
 scorch-it<sup>amma</sup> this- family being-born<sup>ē</sup>  
 “A torment it is, ah, to be born into this family.”

தில்லம்ம *tillamma* for an irreal wish:

- KT 56.4 வருக தில்லம்ம தானே *varuka tillamma tāṇē*  
 may-come<sup>tillamma</sup> self<sup>ē</sup> “Would that she came, she  
 herself.”

தில்ல *tilla* for a wish:

- KT 57.4 உடனுயிர் போகுக தில்ல *uṭaṇ uyir pōkuka tilla*  
 together life may-go<sup>tilla</sup> “May we go from this  
 life together.”

தெய்ய *teyya* for (gentle) admonition:

- NA 215.8f. இன்றுநீ யிவணை யாகி யெம்மொடு  
 தங்கி னெவனோ தெய்ய  
*iṇru nī ivaṇai āki emmoṭu*  
*tankiṇ evaṇō-teyya*  
 today you here-you become(abs.) us-with  
 stay-if what<sup>ō teyya</sup>  
 “Since you are here today,  
 what if you stayed with us, please?”

மாதோ *mātō* as a question suggesting that something is the case:

- KT 253.4 நாட்டுயர் கெடபி னீடலர் மாதோ  
*nāl tuyar keṭa piṇ nīṭalar mātō*  
 day misery be-lost(inf.) after delay-not-he(h.)<sup>mātō</sup>  
 “Surely he will not delay further, so that [your] days are  
 lost in misery?” ~ “Will he delay further...?”

adversative மற்று *marru*:

- KT 299.1 இதுமற் றெவனோ தோழி *itu marr\_u evaṇō tōḷi*  
 this<sup>marru</sup> what<sup>ō</sup> friend “This again, what is it,  
 friend?”

மற்று *marru* as a mark of subject change, frequently used in narrative  
 Tamil:

- Kural 1155 ஒம்பி னமைந்தார் பிரிவோம்பன் மற்றவர்  
 நீங்கி னரிதால் புணர்வு  
*ōmpin amaintār piriv\_u ṅmpal marr\_u avar*  
*nūṅkiṇ arit\_u-āl puṇarvu*  
 protect-if suitable-he(h.) separation protecting<sup>marru</sup>he(h.)  
 leave-if difficult-it<sup>al</sup> union  
 “If [you want to] protect [me], protect [me] from  
 separation from the one suited [to me]. When he, on his  
 part (*marru*), leaves [re-]union will be difficult indeed.”

Supplement on -ō

The particle -ஓ -ō is one of the most complex. There is an old layer (shared by Akam and Puṛam) where -ஓ -ō is a tonal particle of lament or mourning. This concerns metrical patterns within the old stock of Akam and Puṛam formulae: நோகோ யானே *nōkō yāṇē*, “ah, I ache”. Its main function, however, as already shown, is that of an



interrogative particle (for examples, see Chapter 11). The syntactical pattern is:

S [O] P-*ō* (interrogative pronoun possible)

S-*ō* [O] P-*ē*

All types of postposition are possible ([O] P-*ō* S-*ē*, S P-*ō* O-*ē*, S [O] P-*ō* adv.-*ē*), but anteposition is rare. Perhaps as such -*ō* is a possible addition to some types of imperative or optative forms, presumably adding a nuance of politeness (a doubtful “would you?”): KT 169.2 இந்இயரோ *irūiyarō*, “let them break”. Moreover, -*ō* is frequently used for a demarcation of topic, also plausibly to be developed out of the interrogative function.

KT 221.1 அவரோ வாரார் *avarō vārār*  
 he(h.)<sup>ō</sup> come-not-he(h.) “He? He did not come.”  
 ~ “As for him, he did not come.”

KT 21.4f. காரெனக் கூறினும்  
 யானோ தேறேனவர் பொய்வழங் கலரே  
*kār enak kūriṇum*  
*yānō tērēṇavar poy valaṅkalarē*  
 rainy-season say talking-if-even  
 I<sup>ō</sup> believe-not-I he(h.) lie use-not-he(h.)<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Even if you say it is the rainy season,  
 I for one don’t believe it. He does not use lies.”

## 18. Circular Construction (*pūṭṭuvil*)

One of the traditional patterns of syntax within the poem is of utmost importance, as it is followed, in the old corpus, by roughly 30% of the material. Its Tamil name பூட்டுவில் *pūṭṭuvil* (“the drawn bow”), first attested in Nakkīraṇ’s commentary on *Iraiyāṇār Akapporuḷ* 56 (under the name of விற்பூட்டு *virpūṭṭu*), then obtaining its own *sūtra* in *Nannūl* 414. It concerns special poetic licences for postpositions which distort regular word order. The normal word order can be restored by reconnecting the end of the poem to the beginning, just as the bow string connects the two ends of a bow. [In the editions and translations published by the NETamil team a special punctuation mark has been used to mark this phenomenon, namely ∞, the mathematical infinity sign.]

If the same phenomenon is described in terms of particle syntax, we can say that the -ஏ -ē at the end of the poem is exempt from the normal rules of postposition: **not only nouns**, that is, subject or subjects in apposition (cf. p. 69), object and adverbial phrases, can be postpositioned, **but also nonfinite verb forms**, such as infinitive, absolutive and conditional.

Nominal postposition varies only with respect to length, that is, the final noun at the end of a poem can be the head noun of a longer phrase.

subject/subject apposition:

KT 16.1,5 உள்ளார் கொல்லோ தோழி ...

அங்காற் கள்ளியங் காடிற்றந் தோரே

*uḷḷār kollō tōḷi ...*

*am kāl kaḷḷiyaṅ kāṭ<sub>u</sub> irantōrē∞*

remember-not-he(h.)<sup>kollō</sup> friend ...

pretty leg spurge- wilderness traversed-he(h.)<sup>ē</sup>

“Won’t he remember, friend, ...  
the one who has gone to traverse the wildernes of  
pretty-trunked spurge trees?”

object (direct or indirect):

KT 181.1,7 இதுமற் றெவனோ தோழி ...  
பெருமுது பெண்டிரே மாகிய நமக்கே  
*itu marr<sub>u</sub> evanō tōli ...*  
*peru mutu peṇṭirēm ākiya namakkē*  
this<sup>marru</sup> what<sup>ō</sup> friend ...  
big old women-we become(p.)- us(dat.)<sup>ē</sup>  
“This, what is it, friend, ...  
for us who have become great old women?”

adverbial phrase of location:

KT 85.1,6 யாரினு மினியன் பேரன் பினனே ...  
யாண ஞரன் பாணன் வாயே  
*yārinum iniyāṇ pēr aṇṇanē ...*  
*yāṇar ūraṇ pāṇaṇ vāyē*  
who<sup>inum</sup> pleasant-he big love-he<sup>ē</sup> ...  
fertility village-he bard mouth<sup>ē</sup>  
“Sweeter than all [and] great in loving is he ...  
in the mouth of the bard, the man from the fertile village.”

nonfinite postpositions

absolute:

KT 66.1,5 மடவ மன்ற தடவுநிலைக் கொன்றை ...  
வம்ப மாரியைக் காரென மதித்தே  
*maṭava maṇra taṭavu nilai konrai ...*

*vampa māriyai kār eṇa matittē*  
 foolish-they(n.pl)<sup>manra</sup> breadth standing Laburnum(-tree)  
 ...  
 new-they(n.pl.) shower(acc.) rainy-season say  
 estimated<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Foolish indeed are the broad-standing laburnum trees,  
 ...  
 having taken the unseasonal shower for the rainy season.”

infinitive:

KT 157.1,4 குக்கூ வென்றது கோழி ...  
 வாள்போல் வைகறை வந்தன்றா லெனவே  
*kukkū eṇratu kōli* ...  
*vāḷ pōl vaikarai vantānrāl eṇavē*  
 ‘kukkū’ said-it fowl ...  
 sword similar dawn it-came<sup>āl</sup> say(inf.)<sup>ē</sup>  
 “*Kukkū* crowed the rooster ...  
 to say dawn has come like a sword.”

conditional:

KT 245.2,6 நலமிழந் ததனினு நனியின் னாதே ...  
 பல்லோ ரறியப் பரந்துவெளிப் படினே  
*nalam ilantataninum nani innātē* ...  
*pallōr ariya parantu veḷipaṭiṇē*  
 innocence lost-it<sup>inum</sup> abundant pleasant-not-it<sup>ē</sup> ...  
 many(h.) know(inf.) spread come-out-if<sup>ē</sup>  
 “Much more unpleasant than [our] innocence’s being lost  
 ...  
 if it comes out, spreading for many to know.”

It appears possible to distinguish several stylistic types of circular construction:

1. The most frequent and simple type is a poem that contains one single sentence where the head fits to the tail. Occasionally, if the poem contains more than one sentence, the end of the poem will fit its first sentence.
2. The poem contains more than one sentence (two, three, four), but one central element, perhaps the (logical!) subject or an apposition to this subject, follows in postposition. A subtype of this is a conditional postpositioned to the end, which is nevertheless valid for all preceding clauses.

In addition there is something that may be called the status of a visual circular structure, where what is postponed to the end grammatically cannot be counted, strictly speaking, as part of the first sentence of the poem, but of a subsequent sentence, although its presence is necessary in order to understand what is going on at the beginning of the poem, too:

3. The part of the poem postpositioned to the end is, grammatically speaking, an element of the immediately preceding sentence, but should, according to the normal word order, be read in front of it. It is also relevant to the sentence/s at the beginning of the poem.
4. The poem consists of grammatically and syntactically clear-cut and well-ordered sentences, which nevertheless seem to lean on one another, because, for example, the keyword for the understanding of the whole poem is its very last word.

The last type can be exemplified by *Kuruntokai* 1:

செங்களம் படக்கொன் றவுணர்த் தேய்த்த  
செங்கோ லம்பிற் செங்கோட் டியானைக்

கழறொடிச் சேஎய் குன்றங்  
 குருதிப் பூவின் குலைக்காந் தட்டே.  
*cem kaḷam paṭa koṇr<sub>u</sub> avuṇar tēytta*  
*cem kōl ampin<sub>i</sub> cem kōṭṭu yānai*  
*kaḷal toṭi cēey kuṇram*  
*kuruti pūvin<sub>i</sub> kulai kāntaṭṭē.*

red field happen(inf.) killed demon(h.) reduced-  
 red stem arrow<sup>in</sup> red horn elephant

anklet bracelet redness hill

blood flower<sup>in</sup> bunch Malabar-glory-lily-it<sup>ē</sup>.

“Red the ground from killing, the demon reduced  
 by red-stemmed arrows, red-tusked [his] elephant,  
 anklets, bracelets – the Red One’s hill

is full of Malabar lilies, bunches of blood-flowers.”

Note that in contradistinction to verses in Āciriyaṅgā metre, stanzas in Veṅṅā metre end in a short metrical foot (see Chapter 20) and are exempt from “normal” postposition rules. They may finish with an absolutive postpositioned with respect to the main verb:

Pū 5. அடிமுன்றி லிவ்வுலக மன்றளந்தாய் போலு  
 மடிமுன் றிரந்தவனி கொண்டாய் – படிநின்ற  
 நீரோத மேனி நெடுமாலே நின்னடியை  
 யாரோத வல்லா ரறிந்து  
*aṭi mūnril i ulakam anr<sub>u</sub> aḷantāy pōlum*  
*aṭi mūnru irant<sub>u</sub> avani koṇṭāy – paṭi niṅra*  
*nīr ōtam mēni neṭu mālē niṅ aṭiyai*  
*yār ōta vallār aṭintu*

foot three-it(loc.) this- world that-day measured-you  
seeming-it

foot three-it begged earth taken-you earth stood

water flood body tall Māl<sup>e</sup> you foot(acc.)

who recite(inf.) capable-they(h.) known

“You who, it seems, that day in three steps measured  
the world,

you who took the earth by begging for three steps, tall Māl

with the water flood[-coloured] body who stood on earth,

who knows [and] can sing your feet?”

## 19. Formulaic Repertoires and Formulae as Syntactic Matrices

Old Tamil has several sets of formulaic repertoire, beginning with *Caṅkam* poetry, but then also epic and devotional poetry. Only the first of them has been described to some degree, but it will be sufficient to point out the basics which can then be adjusted to various metrical conditions and delimitations of content. To recall briefly Lord's famous definition: a formula is a repetition under identical metrical conditions. As already discussed in the introduction, it is highly likely that Old Tamil poetry originated in an oral tradition since it is easy to show that its basic elements of composition were formulae, however, clearly overlaid with a written tradition since it can be shown how formulaic systems disintegrate. Another aspect which is important to stress is that formulae function as signals in the interaction between bard and listener: even today an educated reader will know what to expect from the way keywords of the construction are positioned within a poem. Formulaic attribution and the interplay between formula, theme and system have first been described by Kailasapathy 1968, which has since been supplemented by more than a dozen publications by Vacek, summed up in his 2007 book.

A few examples are the descriptions of birds, forests and warriors:

KT 246.1 சிறுவெங் காக்கை *ciru-veṅ kākkai*, “small white crow”

KT 103.3 இரைதேர் நாரை *irai-tēr nārai*, “prey-searching heron”

KT 163.3 மீனார் குருகின் *mīn-ār kurukin*, “fish-eating heron(obl.)”

KT 16.5 அங்காற் கள்ளியங் காடு *aṅ-kār kaḷḷiyaṅ kāṭu*,  
“pretty-trunked spurge forest”

KT 67.5 நிலங்கரி கள்ளியங் காடு *nilaṅ-kari kaḷḷiyaṅ kāṭu*,  
“spurge forest with parched ground”



KT 216.2 வாடா வள்ளியங் காடு *vāṭā vaḷḷiyaṅ kāṭu*,

“unfading Valli forest”

(KT 124.2 ஓமையம் பெருங்காடு *ōmaiyaṁ peruṅkāṭu*,

“a big forest of toothbrush-trees”)

KT 15.5 சேயிலை வெண்வேல் விடலையொடு

*cēy-ilai veḷ-vēḷ viḷalaiyoṭu*

“warrior(soc.) with a red-tipped white spear”

KT 378.4 சுடர்வாய் நெடுவேல் காளையொடு

*cuṭar-vāy neṭu-vēḷ kālaiyoṭu*

“young man(soc.) with a fire-tipped long spear”

A case in point are also the designations for the hero belonging to a particular *tiṇai*, such as தண்ணந் துறைவன் *taṇṇan tuṭraivan*, “the man from the cool ghat”, மெல்லம் புலம்பன் *mellam pulampaṅ*, “the soft giver of loneliness”, நன்மலை நாடன் *nal-malai nāṭan*, “the man from a land of good mountains. These formulae then may again fall into subsystems (பெருவரை நாடன் *peru-varai nāṭan*, “the man from the land of big mountain”, குன்ற நாடன் *kuṇṇa nāṭan*, “the man from a land of hills). Formulaic analysis also reveals how close the relation is between Akam and Puṇam; there are clear structural similarities in, say, the epithets used for warriors, women, and trees. Equally similar is the repertoire of mourning: there is no fundamental difference between an absent lover and a king fallen in battle.

The distribution of just one productive formula demonstrates the close relation between the old anthologies:

| person/text                           | PN                                    | KT                                  | NA                 | AN  | AiN             |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|---|-----------------|
| அளியான்<br>யானே<br><i>aḷiyān yānē</i> | –                                     | 30.6,<br>293.8                      | 152.9, 289.9       | –   | 460.5           |
| அளியை நியே<br><i>aḷiyai nīyē</i>      | 228.5                                 | –                                   | (14.12)            | 383.14  | –               |
| அளியன்<br>தானே<br><i>aḷiyaṅ tānē</i>  | 257.5                                 | –                                   | –                  | –   | –               |
| அளியள்<br>தானே<br><i>aḷiyaḷ tāṇē</i>  | 143.7,<br>254.11,<br>293.6            | –                                   | (324.1),<br>352.12 | (73.7),<br>(118.4),<br>146.8, 153.4,<br>(224.18),<br>287.3,<br>339.11,<br>373.19,<br>381.18 | –               |
| அளிதோ<br>தானே<br><i>aḷitō tānē</i>    | 5.8, 109.1,<br>111.1,<br>243.11       | 149.1,<br>212.4,<br>276.8,<br>395.7 | 101.6, 114.5       | 239.1   | –               |
| அளியம் யாமே<br><i>aḷiyam yāmē</i>     | –                                     | –                                   | 368.10             | –   | –               |
| அளியர் தாமே<br><i>aḷiyar tāmē</i>     | 51.8, 52.8,<br>81.3, 237.8,<br>345.12 | 7.3                                 | –                  | 43.13,<br>(78.12)   | 381.3           |
| அளிய தாமே<br><i>aḷiya tāmē</i>        | 248.1                                 | 92.2                                | 163.7              | –   | 284.1,<br>455.3 |

Specific about the Tamil repertoire is the employment of formulae for structuring (and announcing) syntax, with sensitive spots especially

at the beginning of a poem (அம்ம வாழி தோழி *amma vāli tōli*) and the poem end (நோகோ யானே *nōkō yāñē*), as described in Wilden 2006: 235ff.

A typical and very productive formula to end a poem is:

காடு *kātu*, “wilderness”<sup>38</sup>

சுரன் *curan*, “waste land”<sup>39</sup>

இறந்தோரே *irantōrē* “he who traversed”

மலை *malai*, “mountains”<sup>40</sup>

குன்று *kunru*, “hills”<sup>41</sup>

This formulaic end appears to be complementary to the following poem beginnings or main sentences:

உள்ளார் கொல்லோ தோழி *uḷḷār kollō tōli*,

“won’t he remember, friend?”<sup>42</sup>

யாண்டுளர் கொல்லோ தோழி *yāṇṭular kollō tōli*,

“where is he, friend?”<sup>43</sup>

கேளா ராகுவர் தோழி *kēḷā rākuvar tōli*, “he doesn’t hear, friend”<sup>44</sup>

வருவர்கொ றோழி *varuvar-kol vāli tōli*, “will he come, o friend?”<sup>45</sup>

வாரார்கொ றோழி *vārār vāli tōli*, “he hasn’t come, o friend”<sup>46</sup>

கொடியர் வாழி தோழி *koṭiyar vāli tōli*, “cruel [is] he, o friend”<sup>47</sup>

<sup>38</sup> KT 16.5, 67.5, 216.2; NA 14.11, 189.10; AN 1.19, 25.22, 133.18, 151.15, 395.15.

<sup>39</sup> KT 211.7, 215.7, 260.8, 314.6; NA 92.9, 274.9; AN 141.29, 171.15, 201.18.

<sup>40</sup> KT 232.6, 253.8, 287.7, 285.8; AN 111.15, 155.16, 173.18, 185.13, 291.16, 247.13, 249.19, 313.17, 321.17, 347.16, 389.24.

<sup>41</sup> NA 18.10.

<sup>42</sup> KT 16.1, 67.1, 232.1; NA 92.1, 241.1.

<sup>43</sup> KT 195.3, 176.5, 285.3, 325.4; cf. AN 47.14.

<sup>44</sup> KT 253.1.

<sup>45</sup> KT 177.5, 215.3, 260.4.

<sup>46</sup> KT 314.4.

<sup>47</sup> KT 278.4.

எஞ்சினம் வாழி தோழி *eñcinam vāli tōli*,

“we have left behind x, o friend”<sup>48</sup>

Other elements to be taken into consideration are optical strategical points, such as the end of a penultimate line, where so often an imperfective *peyareccam* with a long sub-clause is found, or topical strategical points, such as the designation of the hero, for example நாடன் *nāṭan*, giving rise to the expectation of the same type of sub-clause.

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<sup>48</sup>KT 211.3.

## 20. Metres: Ācīriyappā and Veṅṇpā – Theoretical and Practical Rules

Metre is a very complex topic, and here only a most basic introduction can be given.<sup>49</sup> The primary sources for the traditional descriptions of metre are the *Tolkāppiyam Ceyyūḷiyal*, the *Yāpparuṅkala Virutti* and the *Yāpparuṅkalak Kārikai*. The former started on the basis of the old system relevant for the metres of the *Caṅkam*, that is, basically Ācīriyappā, occasionally contrasted with Vañcippā. Vañcippā never appears independently all on its own, Ācīriyappā has been used also later in epic and epigraphical Tamil, for treatises, as well as for a few archaising texts such as the *Kallāṭam*. The *Tolkāppiyam Ceyyūḷiyal* also accounts for Veṅṇpā, as well as for Kalippā and Paripāṭal, the metres for the two latecomers in the *Eṭṭuttokai*. Veṅṇpā is the main metre of the *Kīlkkāṇakku*, still used for some early bhakti works. It is also the main metre through the ages to write mnemonic stanzas such as author stanzas. Metrical calculation or scansion underwent a profound change during the late *Caṅkam* period, and the bhakti corpus sees an explosion of new metres based on rhythm and music with a fair amount of disregard for word boundaries, described in the two works mentioned above, that is, one treatise with two commentaries.

The metrical units:

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| எழுத்து <i>eḷuttu</i> | graphic unit that in Tamil may be either a vowel, a consonant or a consonant with a vowel |
| அசை <i>acai</i>       | smallest metrical unit which can have up to three syllables                               |
| சீர் <i>cīr</i>       | metrical foot made of <i>acai</i>   |
| அடி <i>aḍi</i>        | line made of <i>cīr</i>   |

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<sup>49</sup> For further reading consult the introductions of Niklas 1988 and Zvelebil 1989, for details on classical Ācīriyappā see Wilden 2014, for a detailed account of the bhakti metres see Chevillard 2014a+b.

Early metres regulate the number of metrical units per foot, the number of feet per line and the number of lines. It is only from Venpā onwards that stanzas are formed.

According to the old metrical system, two pairs of metrical units exist, நேர் *nēr* and நேர்பு *nērpū* along with நிரை *nirai* and நிரைபு *niraipu*. The later system of scansion does away with the two latter subtypes. In other words, while originally overshort *-u* was discounted metrically, later it was simply calculated as a short vowel.

The அசை *acai*-units:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>nēr</i> (C)ṽ <sup>50</sup><br>(C)ṽC<br>(C)ṽ<br>(C)ṽC | <i>nērpū</i> (C)ṽ-C <sub>u</sub><br>(C)ṽC-C <sub>u</sub><br>(C)ṽ-C <sub>u</sub><br>(C)ṽC-C <sub>u</sub>               |
| <i>nirai</i> (C)ṽ-Cṽ<br>(C)ṽ-CṽC<br>(C)ṽ-Cṽ<br>(C)ṽ-CṽC | <i>niraipu</i> (C)ṽ-Cṽ-C <sub>u</sub><br>(C)ṽ-CṽC-C <sub>u</sub><br>(C)ṽ-Cṽ-C <sub>u</sub><br>(C)ṽ-CṽC-C <sub>u</sub> |

There are two possible “anomalies”, namely *aḷapeṭai*, that is, a metrical lengthening to three morae (spelled by adding a short vowel to a long vowel: சேய் *cēy*). Metrical lengthening may in rare cases be a lexical feature of a word, and it is often done as a poetic adornment or for musical reasons. But it is also a means of stretching what is metrically too short into an acceptable *cīr*. It is also possible to have a hypermetrical foot or a கூன்ற *kūṇṇ*, literally a “hunch”.

<sup>50</sup> A rare special case is a metrical foot that is complemented by a *nēr* consisting of a consonant cluster: NA 98.2 சேய்யம் *cēyym*, which has to be analysed as *cēyy-mm = nēr-nēr*.

The possible combination of *acai*-units in a metrical foot (*cīr*) in Ācīriyappā:

| +              | <i>nēr</i> | <i>nirai</i> | <i>nēṛpu</i> | <i>niraipu</i> |
|----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|
| <i>nēr</i>     | •<br>(2)   | •<br>(3)     | •<br>(3)     | •<br>(4)       |
| <i>nirai</i>   | •<br>(3)   | •<br>(4)     | •<br>(4)     | •<br>(5)       |
| <i>nēṛpu</i>   | •<br>(3)   | •<br>(4)     | •<br>(4)     | •<br>(5)       |
| <i>niraipu</i> | •<br>(4)   | •<br>(5)     | •<br>(5)     | •<br>(6)       |

Ācīriyappā allows two *acai* per *cīr* in any combination of *nirai*, *nēr*, *niraipu*, *nēṛpu* – regular (black), permitted (blue), irregular (red). In exceptional cases there may be three *acai* (listed below). The figure in brackets refers to the number of syllables they comprise. In theory combinations between *niraipu* and *nēṛpu* are irregular; in fact they do occur, but rarely. Lines have four *cīr*, the penultimate only three *cīr*, with the exception of Nūṛpā, the adaptation of Ācīriyappā for theoretical texts. The number of lines is almost unrestricted, ranging from three-line poems in the *Aiṅkurunūru* up to 782 in the *Maturaikkāñci*, although an anthology may fix the number of possible lines (4-8 for the *Kuruntokai*). A poem ends in the particle -ḡ -ē (rarely in -ḡ -ō or -ḡ -āy).

#### Practical Rules for Ācīriyappā:

There is a close interaction between metre and sandhi. The end-consonant of a *cīr* often merges with the beginning consonant of the next. A *cīr* can start with a vowel only at the beginning of a poem. Inside the poem every *cīr* must begin with a consonant; the preceding

final consonant or final consonant with elided over-short *-u* go to the next *cīr* and bear the vowel.

- 1) An *acai* should not be counted across word-boundaries (this being the second fundamental difference between early and later metrical theory).
- 2) A *nēr* consisting of a single short open syllable can never begin a *cīr*.
- 3) Words should not be split across different *cīr*, apart from the final consonant or the final consonant plus over-short *-u* which is elided. Exempt from this rule are word forms of four *acai* and more (very rarely nouns, frequently finite verbs and participial nouns).
- 4) Word forms of three *acai* are borderline cases and can be accepted as a *cīr* in basically three situations:
  - a) verb form + particle: வருவர்கொல் *varuvar-kol* (KT 177.5) = *nirai-nēr-nēr*, விடுநண்மன் *viṭumaḷ-man* (NA 68.7) *nirai-nēr-nēr*.
  - b) noun + case ending: வருவிருந்தின் *varu-viruntin* (NA 53.8) = *nirai-nirai-nēr*.
  - c) inserted pronoun: யிறுத்தன்றவர் (*y*)*iruttanr'* *avar* (NA 68.10) = *nirai-nēr-nirai*.
  - [d) problematic *cīr*: னறையறையாத் (*n*)*araiyaraiyāt* (NA 46.7) = *nirai-nirai-nēr*.]

For verb forms plus particle of three *acai* there are different ways to lengthen them to four *acai* which can be split into two *cīr*:

- a) nominal or pronominal complement: காடிறந் தோரே *kāḷ'* *irantōrē* (KT 16.4) = *nēr-nirai nēr-nēr*; அவராற் றலரே *avar ārralarē* (KT 305.4) = *nirai-nēr nirai-nēr*.
- b) metrical doubling of consonants: முகைநா றும்மே *mukai nārumē* (KT 193.6).



- 5) Similarly a number of hypo-metrical feet can be accepted, especially with *vinaiyeccam*-s (*ceytu/ceypu* type = absolutive) that make up a *cīr*: *ceṅru*, *vantu...* (i.e. analyse not as *nērupu*, but as *nēr-nēr*). This does not exclude, however, having *cīr* like *vīrruvīrruk* (PN 35.22) that count as *nērupu-nērupu*. Somewhat less frequent is the *nirai/niraipu* variation: *taṇintu* (KT 195.1) = *nirai-nēr* against *punantulaṅartu* (KT 214.1) = *nirai-niraipu*.

[For *niraipu/nērupu* nouns similar allowances can be made, but they are rare. Verbal roots in *niraipu/nērupu* are not acceptable. Their occurrence before a *cīr* beginning with a nasal has to be understood as *peyareccam* in *-um*.]

- 6) *Aḷapeṭai* and sandhi gemination can be metrically disregarded if necessary.

The rules for *Veṅpā*:

*Veṅpā* allows for two or three *acai* per *cīr* in alternating combinations of value, that is, a two-*acai* *cīr* ending in *nirai* must be followed by one beginning in *nēr* and vice versa. A three-*acai* *cīr*, always ending in a *nēr*, must be followed by a *nēr*. *Veṅpā* accepts four *cīr* per line, but only three in the last, and that last *cīr* is short, i.e., a mere *acai*, no full *cīr*. *Veṅpā* stands on the border between the old and the new type of metrical calculation. Within the verse it no longer counts நிரைபு *niraipu* and நேர்பு *nērupu*, but the short third foot in the final line allows them, under the designations of பிறப்பு *pirappu* and காசு *kācu*. The short foot at the end has syntactic consequences: a *Veṅpā* does not follow the “normal” postposition rules and frequently ends in an absolutive even outside a *pūṭṭuvil*. The number of lines may vary, but the standard *Veṅpā* stanza has four lines; the *Kuraḷ* with only two lines is counted as a “dwarf *Veṅpā*”.

An earlier poetic figure occasionally encountered becomes regular and obligatory from *Veṅpā* times on, namely *etukai*, a rhyme pattern

that concerns the first feet of each line. The minimum is a rhyme between the second syllables of the foot, but often the repeated parts will be longer. The two most frequent patterns are 1a+2a+2d and 3a+4a (Nēricaiveṇṇpā) or 1a+2a+3a+4a (Inṇicaiveṇṇpā). In a Nēricaiveṇṇpā the rhyme word in line 2d is counted as a *tanicol*, a “solitary word”, which often entails a syntactic caesura after the third foot of line 2, as is indicated in print by a hyphen before 2d. *Etukai* gives rise to two forms of poetic licence, namely semantic weakening of the repeated elements and changing of letters by insertion or deletion for the sake of the rhyme: Pēy 12.3f. நன்கோதி *nanḱ<sub>u</sub>-ōti* – பைங்கோத *paim-k-ōta*, with *-k-* inserted for the rhyme. Note that also the word order can be affected: Poy 100.1 ஓரடியஞ் சாடுதெத்த *ōr aṭiyum cāṭu utaitta*, “one foot that kicked the cart”, with a *peyareccam* following its head noun because of *etukai* with line 2 ஈரடியங் *īr-aṭiyum*.

The second possible and frequent but not obligatory feature is *mōṇai*, alliteration within a line.

From bhakti times onwards metrical feet form rhythmical patterns based on combinations of *cīr* made from mostly two or three *acai*, traditionally using standard examples as autonyms:

|                                   |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| <i>cīr</i> with two <i>acai</i>   | <i>tēmā</i><br><i>puḷimā</i><br><i>karuṇṇam</i><br><i>kūṇṇam</i>               | <i>nēr-nēr</i><br><i>nirai-nēr</i><br><i>nirai-nirai</i><br><i>nēr-nirai</i>                 |  |  |
| <i>cīr</i> with three <i>acai</i> | <i>tēmāṇkāy</i><br><i>puḷimāṇkāy</i><br><i>karuṇṇaṇkāy</i><br><i>kūṇṇaṇkāy</i> | <i>nēr-nēr-nēr</i><br><i>nirai-nēr-nēr</i><br><i>nirai-nirai-nēr</i><br><i>nēr-nirai-nēr</i> | <i>tēmāṇkāṇi</i><br><i>puḷimāṇkāṇi</i><br><i>karuṇṇaṇkāṇi</i><br><i>kūṇṇaṇkāṇi</i> | <i>nēr-nēr-nirai</i><br><i>nirai-nēr-nirai</i><br><i>nirai-nirai-nirai</i><br><i>nēr-nirai-nirai</i> |

The most frequent stanza type still has four lines, but the number of *cīr* is variable from two to eight. With the disappearance of

*niraipu* and *nērpū*, over-short *-u* is counted as a normal syllable and word boundaries often become blurred by musical patterns. There is also an influence from the syllable-counting Sanskrit metres, and some metres count both, *cīr* and syllables.

Possibilities of metrical adjustment become more numerous in the later metres. Frequently there are doublets like என்ன *eṇṇa* (inf.) for என *eṇa* (inf.): ஓருரிதுவென்ன *ōr-ūr-itu-v-eṇṇa* (Tē 1.1.3.3), or the reverse, அன *ana* for அன்ன *anna*: வாளன *vāl-ana* (Tē 7.20.1.2).

## Metrical analysis of a verse in Ācīriyappā: KT 3

|                           |                     |                         |                            |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| நிலத்தினும்               | பெரிதே              | வானினு                  | முயர்ந்தன்று               |
| <i>nirai-nirai</i>        | <i>nirai-nēr</i>    | <i>nēr-nirai</i>        | <i>nirai-nēṛpu</i>         |
| <i>nilat-tin<u>u</u>m</i> | <i>peri-tē</i>      | <i>vān-in<u>u</u>-</i>  | <i>muyarn-tan<u>ru</u></i> |
| நீரினு                    | மாரள                | வின்றே                  | சாரற்                      |
| <i>nēr-nirai</i>          | <i>nēr-nirai</i>    | <i>nēr-nēr</i>          | <i>nēr-nēr</i>             |
| <i>nī-ri<u>nu</u>-</i>    | <i>mā-raḷa-</i>     | <i>vi<u>n</u>-rē</i>    | <i>cā-ral</i>              |
| கருங்கோற்                 | குறிஞ்சிப்          | பூக்கொண்டு              |                            |
| <i>nirai-nēr</i>          | <i>nirai-nēr</i>    | <i>nēr-nēṛpu</i>        |                            |
| <i>karum-kōl</i>          | <i>kuriñ-cip</i>    | <i>pūk-koṇ<u>ṭu</u></i> |                            |
| பெருந்தே                  | னிழைக்கு            | நாடனொடு                 | நட்பே                      |
| <i>nirai-nēr</i>          | <i>nirai-nēr</i>    | <i>nēr-niraipu</i>      | <i>nēr-nēr</i>             |
| <i>perum-tē-</i>          | <i>niḷaik-ku(m)</i> | <i>nā-ṭano<u>ṭu</u></i> | <i>naṭ-pē</i>              |

## Metrical analysis of a verse in Venpā: Poy 1

|                      |                      |                      |                    |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| வையந்                | தகளியா               | வார்கடலே             | நெய்யாக            |
| <i>nēr-nēr</i>       | <i>nirai-nirai</i>   | <i>nēr-nirai-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nēr-nēr</i> |
| <i>vai-yam</i>       | <i>taka-ḷi-yā</i>    | <i>vār-kaṭa-lē</i>   | <i>ney-yāka</i>    |
| வெய்ய                | கதிரோன்              | விளக்காக             | செய்ய              |
| <i>nēr-nēr</i>       | <i>nirai-nēr</i>     | <i>nirai-nēr-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nēr</i>     |
| <i>vey-ya</i>        | <i>kati-rōṇ</i>      | <i>viḷak-kā-ka</i>   | <i>cey-ya</i>      |
| சுடராழி              | யானடிக்கே            | சூட்டினேன்சொன்       | மாலை               |
| <i>nirai-nēr-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nirai-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nirai-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nēr</i>     |
| <i>cuṭa-rā-ḷi-</i>   | <i>yā-naṭik-kē</i>   | <i>cūṭ-ṭinēn-col</i> | <i>mā-lai</i>      |
| யிடராழி              | நீங்குகவே            | யென்று               |                    |
| <i>nirai-nēr-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nirai-nēr</i> | <i>nērpu</i>         |                    |
| <i>yīṭa-rāḷi</i>     | <i>nīn-kuka-vē</i>   | <i>yenru</i>         |                    |

Metrical analysis of a verse in (slightly irregular) Āṛucīr  
Ācīriyaviruttam: TVM 5.5.1

|                  |                |                    |                  |                    |                        |
|------------------|----------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| எங்ங             | னேயோ           | வன்னை              | மீர்கா           | ளென்னை             | முனிவதுநீர்            |
| <i>nēr-nēr</i>   | <i>nēr-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nēr</i>     | <i>nēr-nēr</i>   | <i>nēr-nēr</i>     | <i>nirai-nirai-nēr</i> |
| <i>eñ-ña</i>     | <i>nē-yō</i>   | <i>van-nai-</i>    | <i>mīr-kā-</i>   | <i>ḷeñ-nai</i>     | <i>muni-vatu-nīr</i>   |
| நங்கள்           | கோலத்          | திருக்குறுங்       | குடிநம்          | பியைநான்           | கண்டபின்               |
| <i>nēr-nēr</i>   | <i>nēr-nēr</i> | <i>nirai-nirai</i> | <i>nirai-nēr</i> | <i>nirai-nēr</i>   | <i>nēr-nēr-nirai</i>   |
| <i>nañ-kaḷ</i>   | <i>kō-lat</i>  | <i>tiruk-kuruñ</i> | <i>kuṭi-nam-</i> | <i>piyai-nān</i>   | <i>kañ-ṭa-piñ</i>      |
| சங்கி            | னோடு           | நேமி               | யோடுந்           | தாமரைக்            | கண்களொடுஞ்             |
| <i>nēr-nēr</i>   | <i>nēr-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nēr</i>     | <i>nēr-nēr</i>   | <i>nēr-nirai</i>   | <i>nēr-nirai-nēr</i>   |
| <i>cañ-ki</i>    | <i>nō-ṭu</i>   | <i>nē-mi-</i>      | <i>yō-ṭum</i>    | <i>tā-maraik</i>   | <i>kañ-kaḷo-ṭum</i>    |
| செங்கனி          | வாயொன்         | றினோ               | டுஞ்செல்         | கின்ற              | தென்னெஞ்சமே            |
| <i>nēr-nirai</i> | <i>nēr-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nēr</i>     | <i>nēr-nēr</i>   | <i>nēr-nēr-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nēr-nirai</i>   |
| <i>cem-kañi</i>  | <i>vā-yoñ-</i> | <i>ri-nō</i>       | <i>ṭum-cel</i>   | <i>kiñ-ṛa-</i>     | <i>teñ-neñ-came</i>    |

Metrical analysis of a verse in Kattalaikkalitturai  
(5 cīr and 16 syllables): PK 1

|                  |                  |                    |                    |                         |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| பூமரு            | கண்ணிணை          | வண்டாப்            | புணர்மென்          | முலையரும்பாத்           |
| <i>nēr-nirai</i> | <i>nēr-nirai</i> | <i>nēr-nēr</i>     | <i>nirai-nēr</i>   | <i>nirai-nirai-nēr</i>  |
| <i>pū-maru</i>   | <i>kaṇ-ṇiṇai</i> | <i>vaṇ-ṭāp</i>     | <i>punar-mel</i>   | <i>mulai-yarum-pāt</i>  |
| தேமரு            | செவ்வாய்         | தளிராச்            | செருச்செந்         | நிலத்தைவென்ற            |
| <i>nēr-nirai</i> | <i>nēr-nēr</i>   | <i>nirai-nēr</i>   | <i>nirai-nēr</i>   | <i>nirai-nirai-nēr</i>  |
| <i>tē-maru</i>   | <i>cem-vāy</i>   | <i>taḷi-rāc</i>    | <i>ceruc-cem</i>   | <i>nilat-taivenṇ-ṛa</i> |
| மாமரு            | தானையெங்         | கோன்வையை           | வார்பொழி           | லேர்கலந்த               |
| <i>nēr-nirai</i> | <i>nēr-nirai</i> | <i>nēr-nēr-nēr</i> | <i>nēr-nirai</i>   | <i>nēr-nirai-nēr</i>    |
| <i>mā-maru</i>   | <i>tā-ṇaiyem</i> | <i>kōṇ-vai-yai</i> | <i>vār-poḷi-</i>   | <i>lēr-kalan-ta</i>     |
| காமரு            | பூங்கொடி         | கண்டே              | களித்தவெங்         | கண்ணிணையே               |
| <i>nēr-nirai</i> | <i>nēr-nirai</i> | <i>nēr-nēr</i>     | <i>nirai-nirai</i> | <i>nēr-nirai-nēr</i>    |
| <i>kā-maru</i>   | <i>pūm-koḷi</i>  | <i>kaṇ-ṭē</i>      | <i>kaḷit-tavem</i> | <i>kaṇ-ṇiṇai-yē</i>     |

## INDEXES

### Index of Quotations

Abbreviations:

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| AiAi  | <i>Aintiṇai Aimpatu</i>                  |
| AiE   | <i>Aintiṇai Elupatu</i>                  |
| AN    | <i>Akanānūru</i>                         |
| Cilap | <i>Cilappatikāram</i>                    |
| Cint  | <i>Cīvaka Cintāmaṇi</i>                  |
| Kali  | <i>Kalittokai</i>                        |
| KT    | <i>Kuruntokai</i>                        |
| Kul   | <i>Kulacēkaraṇālvār Perumāḷ Tirumōḷi</i> |
| Kuraḷ | <i>Tirukkuraḷ</i>                        |
| NA    | <i>Narriṇai</i>                          |
| Pari  | <i>Paripāṭal</i>                         |
| PeTM  | <i>Periyālvār Tirumōḷi</i>               |
| Pēy   | <i>Pēyālvār Antāti</i>                   |
| PK    | <i>Pāṇṭikkōvai</i>                       |
| PN    | <i>Puraṇānūru</i>                        |
| Poy   | <i>Poykaiyālvār Antāti</i>               |
| Pū    | <i>Pūtattālvār Antāti</i>                |
| PV    | <i>Pārataveṇpā</i>                       |
| TC    | <i>Tolkāppiyam Collatikāram</i>          |
| Tē    | <i>Tēvāram</i>                           |
| TV    | <i>Tiruviruttam</i>                      |
| TVM   | <i>Tiruvāymoḷi</i>                       |



- AiAi 9.2 (p. 143), 26.1+4 (p. 101), 42.4 (p. 121)
- AiE 7.1 (p. 121), 7.1v (p. 121), 55.2 (p. 121)
- AN KV.11 (p. 28), 1.4 (p. 106), 9.2 (p. 32n), 9.21 (p. 28), 16.14 (p. 80), 19.13 (p. 109), 49.15 (p. 44n), 66.11 (p. 109), 98.6 (p. 152), 113.9f. (p. 87f.), 177.13 (p. 137) 398.20f. (p. 156)
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## Index of Suffixes

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| -அ - <i>a</i>                  | neuter plural (p. 37, 81), adjective suffix (p. 49), infinitive (p. 92), perfective peyareccam (p. 99)  |
| -அகத்து - <i>akattu</i>        | locative (p. 32)  |
| -(அ)து -( <i>a</i> ) <i>tu</i> | neuter singular (p. 37, 81), genitive (p. 32)   |
| -அம் - <i>am</i>               | adjective suffix (p. 49)  |
| -அம்/-ஆம் - <i>am/-ām</i>      | 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural (p. 37, 81)   |
| -அம்ம - <i>amma</i>            | particle of lament or inviting attention (p. 56, 172)   |
| -அமை - <i>amai</i>             | perfective verbal noun (p. 37, 111)   |
| -அர்/-ஆர் - <i>ar/-ār</i>      | honorific/plural (p. 11, 37, 81)  |
| -அரேஈ - <i>arō</i>             | unexplained particle (p. 56)  |
| -அல் - <i>al</i>               | with imperfective stem: 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular (p. 81), with verbal root: verbal noun (p. 111), negative imperative (p. 117), with perfective stem: negative suffix (p. 148) |
| -அவை - <i>avai</i>             | neuter plural (p. 81)   |
| -அள்/-ஆள் - <i>al/-āl</i>      | feminine singular (p. 37, 81)   |
| -அன் - <i>an</i>               | 3 <sup>rd</sup> person singular (p. 37, 81), verb: 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular (p. 37); suffix for perfective finite verb (p. 80)   |
| -ஆ - <i>ā</i>                  | [later interrogative particle (p. 56)], with verbal root: negative absolutive (p. 84), positive absolutive (p. 84), negative  |

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
|                         | <i>peyareccam</i> (p. 99), negative neuter singular and plural (p. 148f.)   |
| -ஆகலின் <i>-ākalin</i>  | causal postposition (p. 140)  |
| -ஆகில் <i>-ākil</i>     | conditional postposition (p. 12, 139)   |
| -ஆகிலும் <i>-ākilum</i> | concessive postposition (p. 139)  |
| -ஆதலின் <i>-ātalin</i>  | oblique of verbal noun of <i>ākutal</i> = causal postposition (p. 140)  |
| -ஆத <i>-āta</i>         | negative <i>peyareccam</i> (p. 99)  |
| -ஆது <i>-ātu</i>        | negative absolute (p. 84), negative neuter singular (folding table 3)   |
| -ஆமல் <i>-āmal</i>      | negative absolute (p. 11, 84)   |
| -ஆமை <i>-āmai</i>       | negative verbal noun (p. 37, 111), negative absolute (p. 84)  |
| -ஆய் <i>-āy</i>         | vocative (p. 31n), 2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular (p. 37, 81), imperative (p. 117)   |
| -ஆயின் <i>-āyin</i>     | conditional postposition (p. 139)   |
| -ஆயினும் <i>-āyinum</i> | concessive postposition (p. 139)  |
| -ஆரும் <i>-ār(um)</i>   | unexplained particle (p. 56)  |
| -ஆல் <i>-āl</i>         | instrumental (p. 32, 33), with absolute or finite verb: conditional (p. 12, 139), with finite verb or predicate noun: assertive particle (p. 56, 172) |
| -ஆலும் <i>-ālum</i>     | concessive (p. 139)   |
| -ஆன் <i>-ān</i>         | instrumental (p. 32), locative (p. 32), masculine singular (p. 37, 81)  |
| -இடை <i>-itai</i>       | locative (p. 32)  |
| -இ <i>-i</i>            | 2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular (p. 37, 81), absolute of the 5 <sup>th</sup> class (p. 84)  |

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| -இகா - <i>ikā</i>                  | unexplained particle (p. 56)   |
| [-இகும் - <i>ikum</i>              | imperfective 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural (p. 82)]  |
| -இசின் - <i>icin</i>               | optative (p. 119), suffix for perfective participial noun (p. 79)  |
| -இய - <i>iya</i>                   | infinitive (p. 92), optative (p. 118), perfective <i>peyareccam</i> 5 <sup>th</sup> class (p. 99)                            |
| [-இயம் - <i>iyam</i>               | optative 1.pl. (p. 118)]   |
| -இயர் - <i>iyar</i>                | infinitive (p. 92), optative (p. 118)  |
| -இர்/-ஈர் - <i>ir/-īr</i>          | 2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural (p. 37, 81); feminine plural (p. 37), irr. plural (p. 37)                                      |
| -இல் - <i>il</i>                   | locative (p. 32+n), with verbal root conditional (p. 12, 139), with perfective stem suffix for the negative (p. 148)         |
| -இலிருந்து - <i>iliruntu</i>       | later ablative (p. 33, 85n)  |
| -இலும் - <i>ilum</i>               | with verbal root: concessive (p. 139)  |
| -இன் - <i>in</i>                   | oblique (p. 31, 32), comparative (p. 33, 49), with verbal root: conditional (p. 139)   |
| -இன - <i>ina</i>                   | perfective <i>peyareccam</i> 5 <sup>th</sup> class (p. 99); perfective neuter plural 5 <sup>th</sup> class (folding table 3) |
| -இனும் - <i>inum</i>               | comparative (p. 49), concessive (p. 139)   |
| -ஈர்கள் - <i>īrkaḷ</i>             | 2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural (p. 37), imperative plural (p. 12, 117)  |
| -(உக்)கு - ( <i>uk</i> ) <i>ku</i> | dative (p. 32)   |
| -உடன் - <i>uṭaṇ</i>                | sociative (p. 32, 33)  |
| -உடை - <i>uṭai</i>                 | possessive (p. 61), genitive (p. 32)   |

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| -உடைய <i>-uṭaiya</i>       | later genitive (p. 32)  |
| -உம் <i>-um</i>            | coordinative and indefinite particle (p. 44, 122ff.); imperfective <i>peyareccam</i> (p. 99), habitual future (p. 82, 104), [imperative (p. 117)], with conditional, absolutive and infinitive: concessive (p. 139) |
| -உள் <i>-uḷ</i>            | locative (p. 32)  |
| -ஊ(உ) <i>-ū(u)</i>         | with verbal root: absolutive (p. 84)  |
| -எம்/-ஏம் <i>-em/-ēm</i>   | 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural (p. 37, 81)   |
| -என்/-ஏன் <i>-en/-ēn</i>   | 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular (p. 37, 81), quotative (p. 131)   |
| -என <i>-ena</i>            | adverbial suffix (p. 50), causal absolutive (p. 90), quotative (p. 131)   |
| -எனின் <i>-eniṅ</i>        | conditional of <i>eṇṇutal</i> and conditional postposition (p. 139)   |
| -ஏ <i>-ē</i>               | adverbial suffix (p. 50), sentence final and focalising particle (p. 56, 122, 166ff.), interrogative particle (p. 122)  |
| -ஏல் <i>-ēl</i>            | with verbal root, absolutive or finite form: conditional postposition (p. 12, 139), with verbal root or finite form: negative imperative (p. 121)   |
| -ஏலும் <i>-ēlum</i>        | with verbal root, absolutive or finite form: concessive postposition (p. 139)   |
| -ஐ <i>-ai</i>              | accusative (p. 32, 33), 2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular (p. 37, 81), neuter plural (p. 37)  |
| -ஓடு/-ஓடு <i>-ōṭu/-ōṭu</i> | sociative (p. 32, 33), instrumental (p. 33)   |



|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| -ஓம்/-ஓம் -om/-ōm | 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural: participial noun (p. 37, 81), [pronominalised noun (p. 60)]        |
| -ஓய்/-ஓய் -oy/-ōy | 2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular: participial noun (p. 37, 81), [pronominalised noun (p. 60)]      |
| -ஓர்/-ஓர் -or/-ōr | honorific/plural: participial noun (p. 37, 81), [pronominalised noun (p. 60)]                     |
| -ஓள்/-ஓள் -ol/-ōl | feminine person singular: participial noun (p. 37, 81), [pronominalised noun (p. 60)]             |
| -ஓன்/-ஓன் -on/-ōn | masculine singular: participial noun (p. 37, 81), [pronominalised noun (p. 60)]                   |
| -ஓ -ō             | particle of doubt, interrogation (p. 56, 122), mourning (p. 177), demarcation of topic (p. 177f.) |
| -க -ka            | optative all persons (p. 120), [subjunctive 3 <sup>rd</sup> persons singular and plural (p. 119)] |
| -கண் -kaṇ         | locative (p. 32)  |
| -கம் -kam         | subjunctive 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural (p. 82, 119)  |
| -கள் -kaḷ         | plural (p. 11, 37, 81)  |
| -காள் -kāḷ        | pl. vocative (p. 11, 31n)   |
| -கி(ன்)ற் -ki(n)r | suffix of the present tense (p. 11, 77)   |
| -கி(ன்)ற -ki(n)ra | present tense <i>peyareccam</i> (p. 99)   |
| -கு -ku           | suffix for imperfective finite verb (p. 80)   |
| -(க்)கு -(k)ku    | subjunctive 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular (p. 82, 119)  |
| -கும் -kum        | subjunctive 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural (p. 82, 119)  |
| -கெழு -kelu       | genitive (p. 32)  |
| -கொல் -kol        | interrogative particle (p. 56, 122)   |

|                           |  |
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| -கொல்லோ <i>-kollō</i>     | rhetorical interrogative particle (p. 122)                           |
| -கொண்டு <i>-koṇṭu</i>     | postposition “with” (p. 85)  |
| -(த்)தல் <i>-(t)tal</i>   | verbal noun (p. 111)   |
| -த <i>-ta</i>             | perfective <i>peyareccam</i> (p. 99)                                 |
| -தது <i>-tatu</i>         | (perfective) verbal noun (p. 111)                                    |
| -தமை <i>-tamai</i>        | perfective verbal noun (p. 111)                                      |
| -தலை <i>-talai</i>        | locative (p. 32)   |
| -(த்)தி <i>-(t)ti</i>     | subjunctive 2 <sup>nd</sup> person singular (p. 82, 119, 120)        |
| -(த்)திர் <i>-(t)tir</i>  | subjunctive 2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural (p. 82, 120)               |
| -தில் <i>-tillamma</i>    | particle of irreal wish (p. 174)                                     |
| -தில்ல <i>-tilla</i>      | particle of wish (p. 56, 172, 174)                                   |
| -த்து <i>-ttu</i>         | oblique (p. 31, 32)  |
| -(த்)து <i>-(t)tu</i>     | n.sg. (p. 37, 81), absolutive (p. 84)                                |
| -தும் <i>-tum</i>         | subjunctive 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural (p. 120)                   |
| -தெய்ய <i>-teyya</i>      | particle of admonition (p. 56, 172)                                  |
| -தேஎத்து <i>-tēettu</i>   | locative (p. 32)   |
| -தொறு(ம்) <i>-toru(m)</i> | indefinite suffix (p. 44)  |
| -தோறு(ம்) <i>-tōru(m)</i> | indefinite suffix (p. 44)  |
| -நின்று <i>-niṅru</i>     | ablative postposition (p. 33, 85)                                    |
| -ப <i>-pa</i>             | imperfective 3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, rarely honorific (p. 82) |
| -(ஃ)பல் <i>-(p)pal</i>    | imperfective 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular (p. 81)                 |
| -(ஃ)பான் <i>-(p)pān</i>   | infinitive (p. 93)   |
| -(ஃ)பு <i>-(p)pu</i>      | abstract noun (p. 35), absolutive (p. 84)                            |

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| -மதி - <i>mati</i>           | imperative (p. 117)   |
| -மர்/-மார் - <i>mar/-mār</i> | plural/honorific (p. 11, 37)  |
| -மருங்கின் - <i>maruṅkin</i> | locative (p. 32)  |
| -மற்று - <i>marru</i>        | adversative particle (p. 57, 172)   |
| -மன் - <i>man</i>            | assertive particle (p. 57, 172)   |
| -மன்ற - <i>manra</i>         | assertive particle (p. 57, 172)   |
| -மாட்டு - <i>māṭṭu</i>       | locative (p. 32)  |
| -மாது - <i>mātu</i>          | unexplained particle (p. 57)  |
| -மாதோ - <i>mātō</i>          | particle of rhetorical interrogation (p. 57, 172)                             |
| -மார் - <i>mār</i>           | imperfective 3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural (p. 11, 82),<br>infinitive (p. 92) |
| -மாள் - <i>māḷa</i>          | unexplained particle (p. 57)  |
| -மின் - <i>min</i>           | imperative (p. 117)   |
| -மின்கள் - <i>minkaḷ</i>     | imperative plural (p. 12)   |
| -மீர் - <i>mīr</i>           | 2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural (p. 11, 37, 81)                                 |
| -மீர்கள் - <i>mīrkaḷ</i>     | 2 <sup>nd</sup> person plural (p. 37)   |
| -முதல் - <i>mutal</i>        | locative (p. 32)  |
| [-மே - <i>mē</i>             | imperative (p. 117)]  |
| -மேன - <i>mēna</i>           | locative (p. 32)  |
| -மோ - <i>mō</i>              | imperative (p. 117)   |
| -யாழ - <i>yāḷa</i>           | unexplained particle (p. 57)  |
| -வது - <i>vatu</i>           | (imperfective) verbal noun (p. 111)   |
| -வயின் - <i>vayin</i>        | locative (p. 32)  |
| -(வ)ல் - <i>(v)al</i>        | imperfective 1 <sup>st</sup> person singular (p. 81)                          |
| -வான் - <i>vān</i>           | infinitive (p. 93)  |

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