GRAMMAR OF OLD TAMIL FOR STUDENTS 1 st Edition
Eva Wilden

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GRAMMAR OF OLD TAMIL FOR STUDENTS

1st Edition
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NETamil Series

Classical Tamil is among the oldest literary traditions of the Indian sub-continent, one that reaches back to the first centuries CE and that produced many literary, devotional and theoretical works for more than a thousand years.

The palm-leaf manuscripts at our disposal for the study of this literature are, at best, approximately three hundred years old, and the paper manuscripts for the most part are more recent still. In sharp contrast with current printed editions, these manuscripts exhibit an often bewildering degree of textual variation, from simple variants and occasional glosses to wide-ranging commentaries, many of which still await a first publication.

This wealth of primary material is inexorably yielding to the ravages of the sub-tropical climate and are for the most part not even properly catalogued. With each crumbling leaf, our chances of arriving at an understanding of how the Tamil intellectual universe was construed and interacted with other parts of the Indian world diminish.

Since 2012, an international team of scholars in India and in Europe has been studying these materials from the early stages of digitisation through collation to studies of codicology, text-critical analysis and cultural history.

The aim of this NETamil Series, the direct outcome of their endeavour, is to present significant studies in the field, and thereby to attempt to reconstruct the processes of interaction and transmission that took place prior to the putative ‘Tamil renaissance’ of the 19th century.

This series is published with the generous funding of the European Research Council within the framework of the NETamil Project - Going from Hand to Hand - Networks of Intellectual Exchange in the Tamil Learned Traditions (ERC Advanced Grant no. 339470).
GRAMMAR OF OLD TAMIL FOR STUDENTS

1st 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 ilakkanam, 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 16th year, which means that the beginners course was held for the 8th 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) 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 Cankam 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. Rajarethnam, 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Terminology</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abs.</td>
<td>absolutive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acc.</td>
<td>accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adj.</td>
<td>adjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adv.</td>
<td>adverb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>consonant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comp.</td>
<td>comparative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dat.</td>
<td>dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>feminine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.v.</td>
<td>finite verb</td>
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<tr>
<td>gen.</td>
<td>genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h.</td>
<td>honorific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hab.fut.</td>
<td>habitual future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i.a.</td>
<td>imperfective aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>id.</td>
<td>ideophone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inf.</td>
<td>infinitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inst.</td>
<td>instrumental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inter.pron.</td>
<td>interrogative pronoun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ipt.</td>
<td>imperative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loc.</td>
<td>locative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m.</td>
<td>masculine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.</td>
<td>neuter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neg.</td>
<td>negative</td>
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<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>object</td>
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<tr>
<td>obl.</td>
<td>oblique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opt.</td>
<td>optative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>predicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.a.</td>
<td>perfective aspect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p.n.</td>
<td>proper name</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part.n.</td>
<td>participial noun</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>pey.</em></td>
<td><em>peyareccam</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl.</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pron.n.</td>
<td>pronominalised noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sg.</td>
<td>singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soc.</td>
<td>sociative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sub.</td>
<td>subjunctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suff.</td>
<td>suffix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><code>u</code></td>
<td>overshort <code>-u</code> deleted before vowel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>vowel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.n.</td>
<td>verbal noun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voc.</td>
<td>vocative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v.r.</td>
<td>verbal root</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; week</th>
<th><strong>Bhakti</strong> (<em>Tēvāram, Tiruvāymoli, Tirukkural</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 1</td>
<td>nominal forms (non-marking of cases, word order)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 2</td>
<td>nominal sentences (finite verb – participial noun – pronominalised noun)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 3</td>
<td>attribution (nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 6</td>
<td>clauses: <em>vinaiyeccam</em> (absolutive/converb)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 7</td>
<td>clauses: infinitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; week</th>
<th><strong>Mutoḷḷāyiram, Perunḵāppiyam</strong> (<em>Cilappatikāram, Cīvaka Cintāmani</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 8</td>
<td>clauses: <em>peyareccam</em>, habitual future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 9a,b</td>
<td>verbal roots (for <em>peyareccam</em> and other forms), verbal nouns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 4</td>
<td>string attribution (mixed nominal and verbal forms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 10</td>
<td>moods (verbal sentences, tenses/aspects)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 11</td>
<td>coordination and questions (-um, -ō, -kol, kollō)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; week</th>
<th><strong>Poetics and Commentaries</strong> (<em>Nakkīran’s</em> preamble, TP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 12</td>
<td>embedded clauses (<em>en, āku, pōl</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 13</td>
<td>clauses: conditional (factual and hypothetical), concessive and causal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 14</td>
<td>negation (<em>al/īl</em>, zero suffix, negative stem, double verb forms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 5</td>
<td>denominative (pronominalised nouns as predicate nouns)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 15</td>
<td>double verb forms, <em>muṟṟeccam</em> and auxiliaries</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; week</th>
<th><strong>Caṅkam</strong> (<em>Puṟanāṉūru, Aṅkurunūru, Kuṟuntokai, Narrinai</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 16</td>
<td>particles and word order (<em>ē</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 17</td>
<td>modal particles (<em>māṇ/māṇṟa, āl, amma, tilla, teyya</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 18</td>
<td>circular construction (<em>pūṭṭuvil</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 19</td>
<td>the formulaic repertoires and formulae as syntactic matrices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. 20</td>
<td>metre: <em>Āciriyappā</em> and <em>Venpā</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**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 *Kīḻkkanakku*-works, the five “great poems” (Tamil *peruṅkāppiyam* ~ Skt. *mahākāvya*) of which only three have survived, the Śaiva bhakti corpus called the Twelve *Tirunāṟurai*, 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 10th century, by Middle Tamil, in its turn followed, in the 19th 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early Old Tamil</th>
<th>Kuruntokai, Nannrai, Akananaru, Purananuru, Ain-kurunuru, Patirruppatu, Patuppaitu</th>
<th>stable word order, particles, old pronouns, honorific, formulae, Aciyappā</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle Old Tamil</td>
<td>Kilkkanakkku, Cilappattikaram, Paripatal, Antati-s, Kalittokai</td>
<td>old morphology, new style/content, new pronouns + plural, word order and particle chaos, hybrid forms, rarely present tense, Venpā + etukai rhyme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Old Tamil</td>
<td>Tēvaram, Tiruvāyomolī, Muttoḷḷiyiram, Cintāmani, Tirukkōvaiyār, Periyatirumolī [Kamparamāyaṇam, 12th c.]</td>
<td>metrical revolution + etukai, standardisation of present tense, plural and pronouns; less pronouns, fewer formulae, new vocabulary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Middle Tamil: 1000-1900 AD

Modern Tamil: 19th 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 -kiṟ-kiṟ-.

personal pronouns: 1st singular nominative யான் yān > நான் nān
                2nd singular oblique stem நின் nin > உன் un
plural suffixes: -கள kal (first for neuter, then added to old honorific
                -ஏர் -ஏர், then gradually taking over)
                -கல kāl for vocative
                -மார் -mār for 3rd plural
                -மிர் mīr for 2nd plural
present tense: -kiṟ-kiṟ-
negative absolutive: -ஏமல் -āmal
special conditionals:  
- \( \text{-ēl} \) (after root, after peyareccam and finite verb, after noun)  
- \( \text{-ākil} \)  
- \( \text{-il} \)  
- \( \text{-āl} \) (mostly already after absolutive, but also found after finite forms)  

special imperatives:  
- \( \text{-ēl} \) (negative)  
- \( \text{-miṟkaḷ} \) (old form plus plural suffix)  
- \( \text{-mēnkal} \) (old form plus plural suffix)  

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), Kuṟuntokai, Narriṇai, Akaṇṇūṟu and, in Puṟam (heroic genre), Puṟanāṉūṟu, though the latter two especially contain much younger material. Further in linguistic and poetic development, but still rather close appear the Cēra anthologies Aiṅkurunūṟu (Akam) and Patirruppattu (Puṟam). The first indication of anthologisation is the former invocation stanza of the Kuṟuntokai, now counted as Kuṟuntokai 1, but in fact a very early form of devotional poem dedicated to Murukaṉ, perhaps from the late 5th century. Probably in the early 7th 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 Perunṭevaṉār, 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 12th century onwards [for a detailed account, see Wilden 2014].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>time</th>
<th>Text traditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pāṇṭiya, Cēra, Cōḷa</td>
<td>Akam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3. c.</td>
<td>Karṇṭokai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. c.</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. c.</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. c.</td>
<td>↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. c.</td>
<td>kāṭavul →</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. c.</td>
<td>&quot;Eṭṭuttokai&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 Āciriyam metre are simply counted by line, those in stanzas, that is, from Venpā 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 Āciriyam 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 Ēṭṭutokai

1. Kuṟuntokai (402 poems, 2504 lines; no commentary)
2. Naṟriṇai (400 poems, 4180 lines; no commentary)
3. AkanāṆūṟu (401 poems, 7151 lines; anonymous comm. on AN 1-90)
4. PuranāṆūṟu (400 poems, 5448 lines; anonymous comm. on PN 1-250)
5. Aiṅkuṟūṟu (501+ poems, 2163 lines; anonymous commentary)
6. Patirṟuppattu (80+ poems, 1711 lines; anonymous commentary)
7. Kalittokai (150 poems, 4314 lines; comm. by NacciṆārkkiṆiyar)
8. Paripāṭal (22+ poems, 1833 lines; comm. by ParimēlaṆakar)

Complete list of the Pattuppāṭṭu (3552 lines)

1. Tirumurukāṟṟuppaṭai (317 l.; comm. by NacciṆārkkiṆiyar, ParimēlaṆakar, etc.)
2. Porunarāṟṟuppaṭai (248 lines; comm. by NacciṆārkkiṆiyar)
3. CiruṇaṆāṟṟuppaṭai (269 lines; comm. by NacciṆārkkiṆiyar)
4. PerumpāṆāṟṟuppaṭai (500 lines; comm. by NacciṆārkkiṆiyar)
5. Mullaippāṭṭu (103 lines; comm. by NacciṆārkkiṆiyar)
6. Maturaikkāṇci (782 lines; comm. by NacciṆārkkiṆiyar)
7. Neṭunavāṭai (188 lines; comm. by Nacciārkkiṇiyar)
8. Kuṅcippāṭṭu (261 lines; comm. by Nacciārkkiṇiyar)
9. Paṭṭinappāḷai (301 lines; comm. by Nacciārkkiṇiyar)
10. Malaiṇappāṭṭu (583 lines; comm. by Nacciārkkiṇiyar)

Complete List of Patīṇēṇ Kiḷkkaṇakku:

1. Nāḷaṭiyār (didactic, 400 stanzas; comm. by Patumaṇār, Tarumaṇār, etc.)
2. Nāṟmaṇikkatikai (didactic, anonymous comm.; 101 stanzas)
3. Iniṇānāṟpatu (didactic, anonymous comm.; 40 stanzas)
4. Iniṇiyavaināṟpatu (didactic, anonymous comm.; 40 stanzas)
5. Kāṟnāṟpatu (Akam, anonymous comm.; 40 stanzas)
6. Kaiḷavaḻināṟpatu (Puṟam, anonymous comm.; 40 stanzas)
7. Aintinaiyaimpatu (Akam, anonymous comm.; 50 stanzas)
8. Aintinaiyeḻupatu (Akam, anonymous comm.; 69 stanzas)
9. Tiṇaimoliyaimpatu (Akam, anonymous comm.; 50 stanzas)
10. Tiṇaimalainūṟṟaimpatu (Akam, anonymous comm.; 154 stanzas)
11. Tirukkuṟaḷ (didactic, comm. by Maṇakkuṭavar, Parimēlaḻakar, etc.; 1330 couplets)
12. Ācārakkōvai (didactic, anonymous comm.; 100 stanzas)
13. Paḷamolī (didactic, anonymous comm.; 400 stanzas)
14. Cīṟapāṇamamāl (didactic, anonymous comm.; 102 stanzas)
15. Mutumolikkaṇci (didactic, anonymous comm.; 10 stanzas)
16. Ėḷāi (didactic, anonymous comm.; 80 stanzas)
17. Kainnilai (Akam, anonymous comm.; 60 stanzas)
18. Tirikatukam (didactic, anonymous comm., 100 stanzas)
[19. In-nilai (didactic; 45 stanzas) probably spurious]
**Complete list of the Paṇṇiru Tirumṛai**

| TM I-III: | 1. Campantar: | Tēvāram (385 decades) |
| TM IV-VI: | 2. Appar: | Tēvāram (312 decades) |
| TM VII: | 3. Cuntarar: | Tēvāram (101 decades) |
| TM VIII: | 4. Māṇikkavācakar: | 
| | | Tiruvācakam (652 stanzas + 646 lines),
| | | Tirukkōvaiyār (400 stanzas; comm. by Pērāciriyar) |
| | | Tiruvicaippā |
| | 13. Cēntānar: | Tiruvicaippā, Tiruppallāṇṭu (301 stanzas) |
| TM X: | 14. Tirumūlar: | Tirumantiram, Tantiram 1-9 (3000 stanzas) |
| TM XI: | 15. Tiruvālavāyuṭaiyar: | Tirumukappācuram (12 lines) |
| | 16. Kaṇṭarāttītta Ammaiyār: | Arputat Tiruvantāti, 
| | | Tiruviraṭṭaitānanalai, 
| | | Tiruvallakkāṭṭu Patikam-s (143 stanzas) |
| | 17. Aiyaṭikaḷ Kāṭavar Kōṉ: | Kṣēṭirattiruvēnā (24 stanzas) |
| | 18. Cēramāṉ Perumāḷ: | Pōnvaṇṭattāti, 
| | | Tirukkayilāyaṉṇavulā, 
| | | Ārūrmaṇmaṇṇikōvai (135 stanzas + 190 lines) |
Lists of Literary Works

19. Nakkīratēvar: Kayilaipāṭi Kaḷattipāṭiyantāṭi, Tiruvīṅkōyimalai, Ėluppāṭu, Tiruvālaṅcuḷu Mummanikkōvai, Tiruvēḷukāṛirukkai, Peruntēvapāṅi, Kōppappiracātam, Kār Eṭṭu, Pōṛī Tirukkalivenpā, Tirumurukāṛruppaṭai, Tirukkāḷappatēvar Tirumāṛam (189 stanzas + 725 lines)

20. Kallātatēvar: Tirukkāḷappatēvar Tirumāṛam (38 lines)


22. Paraṅatēvar: Civaperumāṇ Tiruvantāṭi (101 stanzas)

23. Īḷamperumāṇ Atiṅkāḷ: Civaperumāṇ Tirumummanikkōvai (30 stanzas)

24. Atirāvaṭṭiṅkāḷ: Mūṭtapillayār Tirumummanikkōvai (23 stanzas)

25. Paṭṭinattup Piḷḷaiyār: Köyil Nāṅmanimāḷai, Tirukkalumāla Mummanikkōvai, Tiraviṭṭaiṭmarutūr Mummanikkōvai, Tiruvēkampanuṭaiyār Tiruvantāṭi, Tiruvorṛṛiyār Orupā Orupatu (192 stanzas)

Tiruccanpaiviruttam Āḻuṭaiya
Pillaiyār Munmanikkōvai Āḻuṭaiya
Pillaiyār Tiruvulamālai, Āḻuṭaiya
Pillaiyār Tirukkalampakam,
Āḻuṭaiya Pillaiyār Tiruttokai,
Tirunāvukkaracu Tēvar
Tiruvēkātaca Mālai (369 st./211 l.)

TM XII: 27. Čekkilār: Tiruttoṇṭar purāṇam = Periyapurāṇam (3634 st.)

Complete List of the Nālāyirat Tivyappirapantam

1. Poykaiyār: First Tiruvantāti (100 stanzas)
2. Pūtattār: Second Tiruvantāti (100 stanzas)
3. Pēyār: Third Tiruvantāti (100 stanzas)
4. Tirumaḷicaiyā.: Tiruccantaviruttam, Nāṃukam Tiruvantāti (220 stanzas)
5. Nammār: Tiruviruttam, Tiruvāciriyam, Periyatiruvantāti, Tiruvāmil (1293 stanzas)
6. Periyār: Periyālvār Tirumoḻi (473 stanzas)
7. Āṇṭāl: Tiruppāvai, Nācciyār Tirumoḻi (173 stanzas)
8. Tirumaṅkiyā.: Periyatirumoḻi, Tirukuruntāṭakam,
Tiruneṭuntāṭakam, Tiruvelukuṟṟirukkai,
Ciriyatirumaṭal, Periyatirumaṭal (1152 stanzas)
9. Kulacēkaraṇā.: Perumāḷ Tirumoḻi (104 stanzas)
10. Tiruppānā.: Amalanṭippirān (10 stanzas)
11. Toṇṭarāṭipōṭiyā: Tirumālai, Tirupalḷiyeluṟṟi (55 stanzas)
12. Madhurakaviyā.: Kaṇṭinun Ciruttāmpu (11 stanzas)
13. Irāmānujuanāṭrāntāti (108 stanzas)
Lists of Literary Works

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

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

*Perunikatai* (ca. 16 000 lines; incomplete)
*Culāmani* (2130 stanzas)
*Nīlakēci* (894 stanzas; comm. by Camayativākarar)

Further miscellaneous poetic works of the first millennium

*Pāṇṭikkōvai* (350 stanzas)
*Muttollāyiram* (107 stanzas)
*Nantikkalampakam* (113 stanzas)
*Pāratāvēnā* (339 stanzas)
*[Kallātam* (100 poems = 3337 lines)]
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.¹ There are several grammars restricted to the Caṅkam corpus, the most voluminous being Rajam 1992 (without index). Specialised even further (on the Patiruppattu) but dealing extensively with the old verb forms is Aghostialingom 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.

¹ 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 āyam (mostly used in sandhi). It is, like most Indian scripts, of an abugid 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>அ</th>
<th>ஆ</th>
<th>இ</th>
<th>ஈ</th>
<th>உ</th>
<th>ஊ</th>
<th>எ</th>
<th>ஏ</th>
<th>ஐ</th>
<th>ஒ</th>
<th>ஓ</th>
<th>ஔ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>ā</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>ī</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>ū</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>ē</td>
<td>āi</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>ō</td>
<td>au</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consonants

- guttural: ṭ ṇ
- palatal: ḍ ḍḷ ḍḷḷ
- retroflex: த் தே தை தெ தே தை தெ தே தை தெ தே தை தெ தே தை தெ
- dental: ட் டே டை டெ டே டை டெ டே டை டெ டே டை டெ டே டை டெ
- labial: ப் பே பை பெ பே பை பெ பே பை பெ பே பை பெ
- semi-vowel: ய் யே யை யெ யே யை யெ யே யை யெ 
- alveolar: ற் றே றை றெ றே றை றெ 
- retroflex approximant: ல் லே லை 

āyam: க்
0.2 Sandhi in Classical Tamil

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 Eluttatikāram*), 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 -இ AsyncCallback -in AsyncCallback, rendered in modern editions invariably as the locative -இ AsyncCallback -il AsyncCallback, in sandhi both -இ AsyncCallback -in AsyncCallback. 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


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2 This list is an elaboration of the original one made by Sascha Ebeling for the first CTSS.
other vowel: Ṣஇம் Ṣநம்மங்கி cērppa-v-ōmpumati, “Man from the coast, beware!”

Final ೃ, ೆ, ṣ, t, ṭ, ṣ, i, ī, e, ē, ai (front vowels) both within the word and at word boundaries insert the glide -y- before any other vowel: Ṣமஞ்சம் மைன் konrai-y-īnai, “cluster of laburnum”.

Elision of the final vowel is mostly restricted to final -u, counted as over-short (metrically discounted) unless at the end of a two-syllable word with short vowel and single consonant (தித tiru, “Śrī”). The over-short final -u is elided before any vowel: கணங்கு kōntu > கண்ை வன்ன் + கண்ன் vanṭu + inam = vanṭiṇam, “swarm of bees”.

Overshort -u followed by ū- y- becomes over-short (metrically discounted) ந- i-:

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:

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

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

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3 A rare and probably hypercorrect parallel is கண் + எ கண் எர்து + யர்து > கண்ையார்து, “forest river”.

4 A rare additional possibility is சிற்றல் ciriilai, possibly a precursor of the modern adjectival form சிற்றை ciriya.
 Exceptions are made for some monosyllabic adjectives and some pronouns:

- நெச்஛ம் + ati > நெச்஛வ் ati, “red foot”
- நெச்சம் + ilai > நெச்சவ் ilai, “red jewel”
- நெச்சம் + varai > நெச்சவ் varai, “hot mountain”
- நெச்சம் + iṭai > நெச்சய் iṭai, “in between”

An exceptional vowel elision is made with an optative followed by any form of the quotative verb ஐந்துல ஐத்தைல், “to say”. The form வாருகெறாய்ந்த் varukeṟuṇai may either be understood as வாருகெறாய்ந்த் varuku eṟuṇai, “she said ‘I will come’”, or as ஜாருகெறாய்ந்த் varuka eṟuṇai, “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 மறாம் maṟṟamma (for மறா maṟṟa + அம்மா amma) and in peyareccam compounds with the comparative stem அயெர் aṟai-. "to be like that", as in மறாம் அயெர் maṟṟa aṟai, “I am like someone who has forgotten”.

Consonant sandhi

The nasal உ m followed by a consonant assimilates within the word and at word boundaries into the class nasal:
In compounds or for a case relation, final -m may be substituted by the gemination of the following consonant:

\[ m + k > nk \]  \( \text{perum+ ku} \) >  \( \text{perunku} \), “big hill”

\[ m + c > nc \]  \( \text{am+ cilampu} \) >  \( \text{ančilampu} \), “pretty anklet”

\[ m + t > nt \]  \( \text{ku} \) \( \text{ṟum+ tokai} \) >  \( \text{ku} \) \( \text{ṟuntokai} \), “anthology of short [poems]”

Similarly, in compounds or for a case relation, final -m may be dropped before ō-, v- and ō- y-:

\[ m + k/c/t/p > kk/cc/tt/pp \]  \( \text{kamalam} \) \( \text{kan} \) >  \( \text{kamalakkan} \) “lotus eye”

\[ m + n > n \] \( \text{maram} \) \( \text{nī} \) \( \text{ṇṭatu} \) >  \( \text{maranī} \) \( \text{ṇṭatu} \), “the tree grew long”

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

\[ m + m > m \]  \( \text{nāmam} \) \( \text{mārum} \) >  \( \text{nāmamārum} \) “the name will change”

\[ m + n > n \]  \( \text{maram} \) \( \text{nīnṭatu} \) >  \( \text{maranīnṭatu} \) “the tree grew long”

\[ m + m > mm \]  \( \text{cem} \) \( \text{man} \) >  \( \text{cemman} \) “red earth”

\[ m + n > nn \]  \( \text{vem} \) \( \text{nīr} \) >  \( \text{vennīr} \) “hot water”

\[ m + ō > ōn \]  \( \text{tam} \) \( \text{nān} \) >  \( \text{tānān} \) “their string”
The two further nasals possible in final position are retroflex -nants and alveolar -naments.  

Word-final -nants followed by -t- or -n- causes assimilation:
\[\eta + t > \eta t\]
\[\eta + n > \eta n\]

The letter -nants followed by -k-, -c-, or -p- inside a word must become -t-, thus forming the clusters -nantk-, -nantc-, or -nantp-, the same is optional at a word boundary: பண்டையந் புத்தகம் perum-punload cenny > perum-pūṭ cenny, “Cenny with large ornaments”; தமிழ் கதையான் katum kan pani < katuṇkaṭ pani, “fierce-eyed hog”.

Word-final -nants followed by -n- causes assimilation and is then dropped, unless at the end of a short monosyllabic word with a short vowel:
\[\eta + n > \eta\]
\[\eta + n > \eta\eta\]

Word-final -nants followed by -k-, -c-, -t-, or -p- occasionally may change:
\[\eta + k > \eta k\]

An exception is the Cankam word verin, “back”.

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5 An exception is the Cankam word verin, “back”.

Sandhi

\( n + t > nr \) or \( rr \)  
\( ṇ + t > ṇṟ \) or \( ṇṟṟ \)  
\( ṇ + p > ōp \)  
\( ṇ + m > ōm \)  

Final -\( ōy \) can cause -\( m \)- to geminate: \( ṇm + moli > ōm \)  

Final -\( ōl \) can change into alveolar nasal or stop in quite an astonishing number of circumstances, many of them optional.

\( l + k > rk \)  
\( ṇol + kāl kuva > ōl \)  

\( l + c > ōc \) or \( ōc \)  
\( ṇol + cāyal > ōl \)  

\( l + p > ōp \) or \( ōp \)  
\( ṇol + pacappu > ōl \)  

\( l + t > ōt \) or \( ōt \) or \( ōt \) or \( kr \)  
\( ṇol + tuṭaṅkiṉaḷ > ōl \)  

\( l + m > ōm \)  
\( ṇol + mālai > ōl \)  

Final -\( ōy \)_”false word”

Final -\( ōl \)_”word garland”
$l + n > n$ or \(\tilde{n}\) நீவி nīvi > நீநி nūnīvi, “stroking the forehead”; நாள் nal + nakar > நாயாகர nakkār, “good mansion”

Final \(-\ddot{a}t\) changes into its class nasal or stop within a word or compound and optionally at word boundaries:

$! + k > tk$ or \(nk\)  மகா் makāl + \(-\ddot{a}-k\) > மகா்த் makāṭku, “to the daughter”;  வெள் vel + kutai > வெள்வுத் venkutai, “white parasol”; but வருந்துல்-kolū varuntūnāl-kollō, “did she suffer?”

$! + c > tc$ or \(nc\) கற் kṟi + cuṭar < கற்cuṭar, bright glow”

$! + p > tp$ or \(np\) கல் kal + pōkkia tāy > கல்ப் kalpōkkia tāy, “the mother who had let her daughter go”; but கல் போரதவ் kal poḷ paratavar, “fish-taking fishermen”; மோப்பம் onpaḷam, “bright fruit”

$! + t > t$ or \(tt\) தெற் teṭṟu vāl + tānai > தெற்வுத் teṭṟuvāṭ tānai, “an army with shining swords”; தெற் எம்பும் tāl + tōrum > தெற்மும் nāṭōrum “daily”

$! + m > nm$  பையுுய் paiyyul + mālai > பையுுய் mālai, “sorrowful evening”

$! + n > n$ or \(n\)  தெற் tēl + nīr > தெற்nīr, “clear water”;  வேல் vāl nutal > வேல் vāṇutal, “bright forehead”
Consonant gemination

\( ś k, ś c, ś t, ś u p \) undergo gemination:

- after the accusative suffix -\( ōi \).
- after the dative suffix -(e\( \overline{\upsilon} \))\( (\text{uk})kū \).
- after -\( u \) preceded by a double consonant (as in the oblique case).
- after the demonstrative clitics \( ař \)-, \( iř \)-, \( uř \)- and after \( eř \)- (also after \( \text{inta, anta, enta} \)).
- after \( ař \)- of the infinitive.
- after \( iř \)- of the absolutive (including the forms \( ōy \) and \( pōy \)).
- after \( ař \)- of the positive absolutive:

(\( \text{kaṇputayā-k-kuruki} \), “nearing [her], covering [her] eyes” AN 9.21).
- after \( ař \)- of the negative peyareccam (relative participle):

(\( \text{mutirā-t-tinkal} \), “immature moon”, AN KV.11).
- after monosyllabic words ending in a long vowel.
- in compounds (of \( \text{karmadhāraya} \) or \( \text{genitive-tatpuruṣa} \) kind) after mono- and disyllabic neuter nouns ending in a vowel or -\( u, -r, -l \):

(\( \text{vītī-k-katavu} \) “street door”, \( \text{amar-k-kaṇ} \), “beautiful eyes”, \( \text{kīl-k-kaṇakku} \), “minor series”).
Gemination does *not* occur:
- after a finite verb form.
- after - elő of the negative absolutive:
  
  \[\text{without having eaten, he went off}.\]\(^6\)
- after a vocative form.
- after a verbal root.
- after an imperative singular (= verbal root).
- after the clitics - elő, - elő, - elő.
- after the (declension) endings - iliruntu, - olu, - utaiya.
- after the pronouns itu, atu, etu, ivai, avai, evai, nì.
- after en, ettai, ell, pala, cila.

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\(^6\) This beautiful rule does not seem to conform with reality; a spot check in Akanāṇi and Narriṇai revealed that there is about an even distribution of gemination and non-gemination.
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 -ṭṭu for words ending in -m, or by doubling of the last consonant (mostly for words ending in -m/-tu/-ru), or by the oblique suffix -i. The suffix -i may also be added (as a sort of double oblique mark), to any of the others. This marks a case other than nominative and is liberally employed. 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Marking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>zero</td>
<td>= nom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(voc.)</td>
<td>= nom. or loss of ending in m.sg.: நாட் &gt; நாடு or நாடன &gt; nāṭa or nāṭā “O man from the land”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Another possible place holder for the case suffix in metrical texts is the oblique of the 3rd person personal and reflexive pronoun நான்/நாந் தான்/தான் aracan tammath, “the king (acc.)”.

8 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.

9 Nouns in -ai may have a vocative in -ஆய: பைததய் கையாள் > பைததயாய், “o mother”; later the final syllable may be lengthened: தல் > தல் or தல், “o friend”, நுதல் > நுதல் “o [you with a] forehead”, பைதகள் > பைதகள், “o foolish girls.”
Grammar of Old Tamil for Students

oblique
-இ?option: நிலவு > நிலவின், “moonlight”
-து: மரம் > மராத்தி (marattu), “tree”
gemination: ஞூ > ஞூ/ஞூ, “tusk”, ஆறு > ஆறு/அறின், “path, river”
cases
dative -(ு) அ (uk)ku
locative -உைத் -அ (il)10, -அக்கை, -கண் -தவி -மருண்டின், -மாற்று -மத்து, -பாடு -உல்;
-அநைது -ெது, -அநை -னை, (etc.)
sociative -ஓீ -ைது / -(ே்)கை -ந்தை
instrumental -அை -ால / -அைத் -ாள்; -ஓீ -ைது
accusative -அை -ா

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 (மார்கு இல், “servant of Māl”).

10 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 -இ option, 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.

11 Comparative means here a simple comparative particle, often combined with others such as அண்ணா: கலின் கொலுட்டு குழங்கம் கிலி கொலுத்து அண்ணா, “gone like the wind” (NA 249.1), தமிழ் தார் கொல்லின் அண்ணா, “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, locative is the only one found more often than occasionally; besides by -ஓṭu (in sandhi before vowel -ஐḻu) it can also be expressed by -ஒட்டு. Instrumental, for instrument and for reason, may be marked in -ஏல -āl or -ஆன -āṉ (frequently falling together in sandhi); rarely a locative suffix has instrumental meaning and vice versa. Accusative -ஆi, 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 -இன -in. Late in the first millennium there is an occasional vinaiyeccam நின்று freezing into a postposition that expresses the idea of moving away from something (literally “after having stayed in x”), followed by the modern -இல்லிருது -ilirantu 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. திருமலால் | அருள்பாத்தா காதக்கன், “Catakopan who is graced by Tirumal”), 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 தேவாலயம் மலையும் வந்த காடலும் மரத்தக்கம் | விழுந்து விளுந்தியது … “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-tinai), that is, animate, as male and female, and “low-class” (akrīnai), 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 aṇi, “to adorn/adornment”; கூத் cutar, “to glow/glow”

A minimal modification is the occasional verbal root with lengthened vowel: பெறு peṟu, “to obtain” > பெறு pēṟu, “benefit”

primary suffixes:

- உ/ஆ (v)u forming neuter nouns often freely variable with -am
- ட் -am நைனு/னைனம் neınu/neınam, “heart”
- த் -ā often freely variable with -u: நிலவு/னிலா nilavu-nilā, “moonlight”
- த் -ar forming adjectives: காம் kāmar, “desirable”
-uḷ forming neuter nouns; less productive:
- ceyyul, “metrical text”, paiyyul, “sorrow”, vilaiyul, “produce” (NA 45.9)

-vi/cii/tti forming feminine nouns: pulaiyul, “washer woman”, panaitōli, “she with bamboo shoulders”

-i forming masculine agent nouns: enți, “holder” (in bhakti)

-vu/-(p)pu forming abstract nouns from verbal roots: ceyyu/ceypu, “doing”

-vai形成抽象名词从动词根：alavai, “measure”

-mai形成名词（事实上是传统形式从其中形容词是衍生的）：perumai, “greatness”, arumai, “difficulty”, but also used on verbal roots aittōli, “courage”, utaimai, “possession”

-(k)kai形成名词：ceykai, “action”, vālkai, “livelihood”

-(c)ci形成名词：punarcci, “union”

-(t)ti形成名词：ceyti, “action”

-al/-tal形成动词名词12: ceyal/ceyal, “to do”, pumarcci, “to unite”

12 The verbal noun in -tal is the traditional form used to refer to a verb in the grammatical tradition. Note that the short form in -al is homophonous with the negative root imperative: ceyal can be “to do” or “don’t do”.
puṇaral/ puṇartal, “to unite”, but 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: அன்னண சண, “brahmin”, விநாயர் வியாயர், “workers”; the feminine often rather adopts the ending -இ for this type of noun: கலவன் “robber”, but கலவி, “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 -அ/-ஆ ar/-ār denotes both and the decision has to be made by context. From bhakti times onwards the modern plural suffix -கல் 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 குறிப்புவினை, “verb by intention” in the Tamil tradition. For both these formations the whole range of persons, numbers and genders is employed.
singular
1. -அைம்/-ஆைம் -en/-ēn
2. -இ-ன்/-சோல் -oy/-ōy
3.m. -அந்/-ஆந் -an/-ān, -சோல்/-ோல் -on/-ōn
3.f. -அல்/-ஆல் -al/-āl, -சோல்/-ோல் -ol/-ōl
3.n. -(அ) Alps - (a)tu
plural
1. -அயு/-ஆயு -am/-ām, -சும்/-சும் -em/-ēm, -சும்/-சும் -om/-ōm
2. -இக் -ir/-īr (-இக் க் -irka, -இி மிர், -இி க் -mērka)
3.h. -அரு/-ஆரு -ar/-ār, -சோல்/-ோல் -or/-ōr (-சோல் -mar, -ோல் -mār)
   (pl. -அக் -kal, -ஆக் -ākka -arkal/-ārkal)
3.n. -அயை/-ஆயை -ai (pl. -அக் -kal)
   pl. மகளி - kēlir, “relatives”

Note that in any ending, pronominal or verbal, the distinction
between long and short இ/ை 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 இ/ை a/ā and இ/ை 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 -amai          தமிழ் cey-t₁-amai, “the having done”
-ஆமை -āmai          தமிழ் cey-y-ā-mai, “the not doing, not
                      having done”

¹³ The pl. suffix -kal (in 2nd and 3rd 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 Kilkanakkku and the Cilappattikāram), 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 12th-century grammar Vīracōliyam. Many derivations are fairly transparent and regular, others are markedly less so, one of the famous examples being Skt. asura- > Tamil ஆணாண் avuṇaṇ. 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:

\[
\begin{align*}
k, \text{kh}, g, \text{gh} & \rightarrow \text{ṅk} & \text{sanga}-, \text{sangha}-, \text{śāṅkha}- & \rightarrow \text{ங்கம் caṅkam}, \text{“union, congregation, conch”} \\
c, \text{ch}, j, \text{jh} & \rightarrow \text{ṭ c} & \text{icchā-} & \rightarrow \text{சிவா civaṉ, “lord Śiva”} \\
t, \text{th}, d, \text{dh} & \rightarrow \text{ṭṭ t} & \text{daṇḍa-} & \rightarrow \text{தண்டு taṉṭu}, \text{“stick”} \\
t, \text{th}, d, \text{dh} & \rightarrow \text{ṭṭ t} & \text{daṁma-, dhāman-} & \rightarrow \text{தமம் tāmam}, \text{“string, site”} \\
p, \text{ph}, b, \text{bh} & \rightarrow \text{τ p} & \text{bali-} & \rightarrow \text{பலி pali}, \text{“offering”} \\
ś, s & \rightarrow \text{ṭṭ c} & \text{śiva-} & \rightarrow \text{சிவன் civaṉ, “lord Śiva”} 
\end{align*}
\]
Nouns

§ > ī, t

varṣa- > varuṭam, “year”

h > ḷ, k

varāha- > mārṭaḥ varākam, “hog”

Prakrit influence is betrayed by the weakening of intervocalic consonants that could be represented in Tamil: gopāla- > எல்லாள் kōval, “cowherd”; bhūja- > முள் puyam, “arm”; Skt. krṣṇa- > Pkt. kanha- > கன்னா kāṇṭaṇ, “lord Kṛṣṇa”.

Among the vowels, Sanskrit e and o are represented in Tamil by the long vowels ē and ō, while Skt. vocalic r and ṛ are not found: amṛta- > ஆம்மர் amutam/amṛtam, “ambrosia”; vṛtta- > விருண் viruttam, “circle”.

However, Tamil has one more nasal than Sanskrit, the alveolar ṣr ṣ, and many Sanskrit intervocalic dental nasal n are depicted by a Tamil alveolar: avani- > அவனி avanī, “earth”; dhanā- > தன்ம் tanam, “wealth”. Occasionally a Sanskrit r is rendered not by Tamil ṛ r but by ṛ r: sthira- > சிற்றி tiram, “firmness”.

Since Tamil does not begin words with ṛ r or ṣ l, corresponding Sanskrit items are prefixed with அ- a-, இ- i- and உ- u-, depending on the surrounding phonemes: rakṣasa- > ரக்ஷக் arakkaṇ, “demon”; rāma- > ராம் irāmaṇ, “Rāma”; roma- > ரம் urōmam, “hair”; lokā- > லோக் ulakam, “world”; lanka- > லாங்க் ilakai, “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- > கேம் āmam, “protection”; jñāna- > ஜன்ம் jñānam, “knowledge”; cakra- > சக்கர் cakkaram, “discus”; divya- > திவ்விய tivviyam,

14 Initial sibilant or h- may be lost in borrowing: hara- > ஹரா aran, “Hara (~Śiva)”.
“divine”, bhakti - > பதி patti, “devotion”; prabandha - > பிரபாதணம் pirapantam, “composition”.

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

Many important words can have several forms: Śrī > சிரி, சிர, 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 -aṅ: அரசா/அரசர் aracu/aracan, “king”
- ā (f.) > -ai n.: senā > செந்நி cēnai, “army”
- i (m./n./f.), -ī, -in > -i (m./n./f.): nadī > நதி nati, “river”
- u (m./n./f.), -ū > -u (n.) madhu > மது matu, “honey”

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

Another frequent strategy besides borrowing are calques, and terminologically important words may have both: sūtra - > சூறா் cūttiram, “aphorism” and நூல் nūl, “text” (literally both sūra and nūl mean “thread”); veda - > வேதம் marai and வேதம் vētam, “Veda”;

karman - > கார்மன் karumam and வினை viṇai, “(past) deeds”; artha- > அர்஥ம் porul, “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” > லக்ஷணம் ilakkaṇam “grammar” paired with lakṣya- “what is to be explained” > லக்ஷ்யம் ilakkiyam “poetry”.
Verbs are moving over rather late and are always borrowed into the 11th class of strong verbs: vañj > vañci-ittal, “to deceive”; cint > cinti-ittal, “to think”.
1.2 Pronouns

Personal pronouns

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<th>Base Form</th>
<th>Oblique</th>
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</tr>
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<td>2nd sg.</td>
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<td>நிய, later: உங்</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd sg. (m.f.n.)</td>
<td>தான்</td>
<td>தான்</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st pl.</td>
<td>யாம (exclusive), நாம (inclusive)</td>
<td>எம (exclusive), நம</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd pl.</td>
<td>நிர், நியிர்</td>
<td>நம</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd pl. (h.+n.)</td>
<td>தாம்</td>
<td>தாம்</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The third person pronoun தான்/தாம் 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 aracăn 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 (எனாது, நினாது/உனாது, etc.) and even to use a short form (எ, நின/உன, etc.) to mark a genitive with a plural object:

Tē 3.4.1.2 உன் kalal toḻutu eluvēn
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 (ு- u-), and further off (.iv- a-), of which the intermediate does not much survive Cankam times. The corresponding interrogative is எ- e-, in some forms உ- y-.

These stems can simply be used in the adjectival position as proclitic vowels (அமர் a-m-maram, “that tree”; ஃவுல் i-uv-ulaku, “this world”), but there is a corresponding system of full forms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>இ- i-</th>
<th>உ- u-</th>
<th>ஆ- a-</th>
<th>இ-u/ உ-y/ -y-</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m.sg.</td>
<td>இவன் ivan</td>
<td>உவன் uvan</td>
<td>ஆவன் avan</td>
<td>இவன் evan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f.sg.</td>
<td>இவல் ival</td>
<td>உவல் uval</td>
<td>ஆவல் aval</td>
<td>இவல் eval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.sg.</td>
<td>இவது itu</td>
<td>உவது utu</td>
<td>ஆவது atu</td>
<td>இவது etu, உவது utu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>மாவது yātu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>மாவது yāvatu, இவன் evan, ஆவன் en</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.h./ pl.</td>
<td>இவர்(கற) ivar(kal)</td>
<td>உvar</td>
<td>ஆvar(kal)</td>
<td>உırl் yār, ஆர் ār, மாவர் yāvar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n.pl.</td>
<td>இவை ivai</td>
<td>உவை u vai</td>
<td>ஆவை avai</td>
<td>இவை evai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 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 ஆம் anta and ஆம் 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. இவின் itavru, அவின் avavru). 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: உடன் yarum, “anybody, everybody”. The same can be done with nouns: நாள் nāḷ, “day” > நாள்-um nāḷum “daily”. A post-position with a similar function is தூய்வு/தூய்வு tōru(m)/tōrum(m), which is to be added to nouns (பட்டால் nāl-tōrum, “every day”), but also to verbal roots: வைகால் தூய்வு கால்-tōrum, “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: தவுக்கால் தூய்வு vaikal tōrum, “every day” (KT 298.3); தூய்வு tōru followed by a vowel also changes to தூய்வு tōru.17

In order to emulate a Sanskrit relative construction, the அ- a- stem can be juxtaposed to the ச- ச- e-ly- stem (yad ~ tad = உடன் yātu ~ உடன் atu).18

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17 An alternative to tōru with a verbal root is repeated verbal root or abstract noun plus -உழி -uḻi: உடன்-uḻi உடன்-uḻi tōtuḻi tōtuḻi, “whenever it touches” (KT 399.3), but also உடன்-uḻi celuḻi celuḻi, “wherever she goes” (AN 49.15). Note, however, that -உழி -uḻi can also be used with an absolutive for a temporal clause (cf. p. 98n).

18 An early example is found in Poy 44.1 தம் உக்கண்டது எயற்றவு அயற்றவு தம் tamar ukantatu e uruvam a uruvam tāṉē, “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 (iva)
- உவ (uva)
- அவ (ava)
- இவᾶ (ivaṇ)
- ஆvais (āṅkaṇ)
- ஈᾶைட (īṅṭai)
- இᾱᾁ (iṅku)
- உᾱᾁ (uṅku)
- அᾱᾁ (aṅku)
- மாᾱᾁ (yāṅku)

**where?**

- இᾱᾁ (iṅku)
- உᾱᾁ (uṅku)
- அᾱᾁ (aṅku)
- ஆᾱᾁ (āṅku)
- யாᾱᾁ (yāṅku)

**in between:**

- ஆயிைட (āyai)

**beyond:**

- உΆப᾽ (umpar)

**before:**

- ஊᾱᾁ (ūṅku)

**like this/like that/what, why:**

- இᾱஙனΆ (iṅṅaṉam)
- அᾱஙனΆ (aṅṅaṉam)
- எᾱஙனΆ (eṅṅaṉam)

**in which manner:**

- innaṇam/aiṇṇam/enṇṇam

**how much:**

- e(n)naį

**today, that day:**

- inru/irru, aiṇru/aiṇru

**when?, always:**

- erru, erṇru

**now:**

- ین (ini)

**even now, again:**

- ینnum

In addition to these, there are the pronominal-adjectival stems இ(இ)ைன/அ(அ)ைன (i(n)naį/ai(n)naį) which form a full paradigm of

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19 In an attributive position before a noun இ(இ)ைன/அ(அ)ைன inru and அ(அ)ைன anru have the rare alternate (adjectival?) forms இ(இ)ைன இரிய, அ(அ)ைன அர்ரை, அ(அ)ைன anru, arṟai: இ(இ)ைன இரிய, அ(அ)ைன அர்ரை, அ(அ)ைன arṟai tinkle, “that day’s moon” (PN 112.1).
persons and numbers expressing that something/someone is like this (i-) or like that (a-): கடல் அய்யல் kūṭal aṉaiyāl, “she who is like Madurai”. The most frequent forms for neuter singular and neuter plural are அக்குற்று/அக்குற்று aṟṟu/aṟṟu and அக்கன்னா/அக்கன்னா aṉṉa/aṉṉa, the latter of which can also be used adverbially (“thus”), and அக்கன்னா aṉṇa is one of the more frequent particles of comparison (“like”). Moreover the அ(ன)யா a(n)ṇai stem can merge with a perfective verbal stem to form a peyareccam compound:

KT 106.6 தான் மண்டன்னாய்ம என விடுகாம்துதே
he united-such-we say(inf.) send-we(sub.) message
g “Let us send a message to say we are [still] like when he united with [us].”

A few more pronominal adjectives exist: பல pal, “many”; சில cil, “few”; பிற pira, “other”; மார்ரு marru, “other”; வேரு 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 derivates (for அஆரு aru, cf. அஆரும் arumai, etc.). The simplest manner is to put another noun in attributive position directly before another noun.

The most frequent Old Tamil adjectives are:

- அஆரு aru, “rare, difficult, precious”
- கஆது kaṭu, “fast, fierce, harsh”
- சிறு ciru, “small, little”
- இஆரு iru, “big”, “dark”
- எப்பெரு peru, “big, great”
- குறு kuru, “short”
- நெது netu, “long”
- புது putu, “new”
- பாலா pala, “old”
- நாரு naru, “fragrant”
- கரு karu, “black”
- செம் cem, “red”
- பாசு pacu, “green”
- வெல் vel, “white”
- இலா ila, “young”
- முது mutu, “aged”
- தட்டா tata, “broad, large”
- நல் nal, “good”
toast, “old”

low, mean”, “tawny”

soft, tender”

val, “strong”

in, “pleasing”

ol, “bright”

tan, “cool”

in, “firm, solid”

tū, “pure”

tel, “clear”

num, “fine”

val, “generous, liberal”

cem, “straight”

tim, “sweet”
	
em, “hot”

pai, “fresh”

mā, “big”, “dark”

vai, “sharp”

The following seven are the established techniques for adjective formation:

1 adj. with consonant stem:  

2 adj. in -u/-a + class nasal:  

3 verbal root as adj.:  

good cow”

difficult desert”

high mountain”
4 noun in attributive position: भर्त्रतिसुर kūṭu-nīr, “deep water”

5 noun + suffix -अ a:

6 noun + suffix -अम am:

[7 modern form: बेपाइय periya, “big”]

A comparative is not expressed by changing the form of the adjective, but the preceding noun takes the comparative suffix -अ i plus -ल -um: निलातितिन perī, vāṇinum uyarntaṟu ... aṟpu, “bigger than the earth, higher than the sky (…) is love” (KT 3.1+4). Equal degree in quality is expressed by simple -अ i without -ल -um: भर्त्रतितितितितिति kūntalī nariya ... pū, “flowers as fragrant as the tresses” (KT 2.4f.).

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20 In traditional grammar -अम is taught as an increment (cāriyai) with tree names in particular (cf. Tolkāppiyam Eluttatikāram, 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: நனிஃ, “much”, தவ, “very”.

1. Any adjective used in the neuter form, either singular or plural, can stand for an adverb: சிறிஃ cirițu, “a little” (KT 14.6), காண்ணி katiya, “loudly” (KT 194.3).

The oblique form is also possible, sometimes even a double oblique: சிறிஃணிஃ nūṇṇitiṉ, “subtly” (KT 167.6); பெண்டி elītanĩ�, “easily” (NA 239.3).

2. In isolated cases we see what looks like the dative of an adjective: நிஃ nṟku, “well”.

3. The enclitic particle -ē can be added to an adjective to form the adverb: வநல் vallē, “strongly”.

4. The infinitive -eṇa of the quotative verb எண்டுனா tannēṇa, “to speak”, is not only employed in the formation of ideophones (see below), but also of adverbs: எண்டுனா tannēṇa, “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: இற்றப iṟappa, “exceedingly” (NA 338.4).

6. Absolutes can be used as adverbs, especially when they stand in concatenation with another absolute: விராய் 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”
- கிள் kīl, “beneath”
- முன் mun, “before”
- பின் pin, “after”
- உதன் utan, “along with”
- இல் ul, “inside”
- எதிர் etir, “opposite”
- வெல்ல veli, “outside”
- பூச்சு puram, “outside”

Note that முன் mun and பின் pin have a number of alternate forms such as: முன்புனர், பின், பின்புனர், etc.
### 1.5 Numerals

#### Cardinal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Numerals</th>
<th>Vowel Sandhi</th>
<th>Predicative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ஒ㎝ oru</td>
<td>ஒஃ or</td>
<td>ஒஃன்று</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>இ㎝ iru</td>
<td>இஃ ir</td>
<td>இஃறண்டு</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ஞ㎝ mu</td>
<td>ஞஃ mū</td>
<td>ஞஃமுனு</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ி் nāl</td>
<td>க் nālu</td>
<td>க்nாகு</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ஞ㎝ ai</td>
<td>ஞஃ aим</td>
<td>ஞஃஞாஞ்டு</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>த் aru</td>
<td>த் ār</td>
<td>த்ஞாஞ்</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ட் elu</td>
<td>ட் ēl</td>
<td>ட்ெஞ்</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>ட் en</td>
<td>ட் ēn</td>
<td>ட்ெஞ்ெது</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>ட் onpatu</td>
<td>ட் னெதுெ்</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>ன் patu/</td>
<td>ன் னெதுெ்</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ய் pati</td>
<td>ய் னெதுெ்</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>ய் pati</td>
<td>ய் னெதுெ்</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>ன் nūru</td>
<td>ன் nūru</td>
<td>ன் nūru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
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<tr>
<td>900</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Ordinal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Numerals</th>
<th>Vowel Sandhi</th>
<th>Predicative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ஒ㎝ oru</td>
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<td>இ㎝ iru</td>
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<td>ஞ㎝ mu</td>
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<td>ஞஃமுனு</td>
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<td>த் ār</td>
<td>த்ஞாஞ்</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>ட் elu</td>
<td>ட் ēl</td>
<td>ட்ெஞ்</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ய் pati</td>
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<td>ன் nūru</td>
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<tr>
<td>1000</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
<td>ன் iru</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 stad satōntā ḍrāma māmūntukāḷām ēlum mūṟrum muṭi āṇaittum, all the seven [plus] three heads” but Poy 35.3f. ḍrāma māmūntukāḷ īr aintu muṭiyān, “he with twice five heads”. Sanskrit numerals are borrowed freely from bhakti times onwards.

The numeral oruōr 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 என்றத், “to say”, in any of its forms. This means they are not only used as adverbs (abs. -என்ற -enru or inf. -என -enra), although that is by far the most common usage, but also as adjectives (verbal root -எ -en or peyarecam -எந்த -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 தாலேலேலா tālēlō (Periyāḷvar fourth decade). Some ideophones also take other forms such as குக்கு 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 அன்றேனா antō and the bhakti-time அந்தேதா antō.

The most common ideophones are:

- அண்மைம் ammen denoting something overfull
- இண்மைம் immen denoting a humming sound
- இலுமேம் ilumen denoting noise or sweetness
- ஓயேம் oyyen expressing urgency
- ஒலேம் ollen denoting sound
- கடுமேம் katumen denoting quickness
- கம்மேம் kammen denoting silence
- கலேம் kallen denoting excitement or noise
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tamil</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>கிடிவென</td>
<td>denoting tinkling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>நேரேண்</td>
<td>denoting suddenness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>தன்னென</td>
<td>denoting coolness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>தவ்வெ</td>
<td>denoting heat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>துற்றெ</td>
<td>denoting heat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>துறுமென</td>
<td>denoting something falling into water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>துண்ணெ</td>
<td>denoting 1. startling 2. fright 3. suddenness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>நல்லெ</td>
<td>denoting silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>புலென</td>
<td>denoting futility/emptiness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 கோல் kollō:

- மும் amma: lament; invitation of attention
- ரார் arō: interrogative (late)
- ரார் ar: ?
- ரால் al: assertive
- ரா ikā: ?
- ரா தே sentence-final; focalising; interrogative (late)
- ரா தே: interrogative
- ரா கோ: interrogative
- ரா கோ: ?
- டில் tilla: wish
- டையை teyya: admonition
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Particle</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>மாண் maru</td>
<td>adversative; ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>மண் man</td>
<td>assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>மாண்ட மாண்டம் manra</td>
<td>assertive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>மாண் mātu</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>மாண் mātiō</td>
<td>rhetorical question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>மாண் māla</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>மாண் yāla</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 வண்டி விலிப்புலாசறி வண்டி eva pilappūṇṭo
what mistake it-is “What mistake is there?”

KT 207.1 腚வாதம் தாம் celav arităkum
going difficult-it become-it. “Going WILL be difficult.”

The simplest form of a nominal sentence is an unmarked juxta-position of noun to noun:

KT 35.5 வாதையம் பிரித்திசுந்திகள் அல்ல vāṭaiyum pirinticiṉērkkalē
north-wind separated-they(dat.) fire “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 Āciriyam metre.]

Pēy 53.4 வேண்காடம் உண்மையறுப்பும் வேண்காடம் vēṇkaṭamē yam virumpum verpu
Vēṇkaṭamē we desiring- mountain
“The mountain we desire is Vēṇkaṭam.”

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  uyir tavac ciṟitu, kāmamō peritē
life very small-it, desire⁰ big-it⁰
“Life is very small, desire, ah, it is big.”

NA 101.5f. turai nāṇi irunta pākkamum urai nāṇi | initumaṇ
ghat nearness been- village⁰ staying much | pleasant-it⁰
“Staying in the village, too, that was near the ghat, was very pleasant indeed.”

KT 12.4 kavalaitt, enpa avar cenra ārē
crossroad-it they-say he(h.)- gone- way⁰
“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 yāṇṭu uḷaṇ kollō
“Where is he?”

KT 379.1 inṛu yāṇṭaiyano tōli
today where-he⁰ friend
“All right, 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 kurippuvinaimun, or, in English, denominative, they come close to being verbs, while on the other side of the border the distinction between a participal 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.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun</th>
<th>நா驷 nāṭu “land”</th>
<th>செளம் celvam “wealth”</th>
<th>அறம் aram “duty”</th>
<th>வணம் vannam “colour”</th>
<th>நெசாம் neńcam “heart”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stem</td>
<td>நா驷ன் nāṭṭaṇ “man from a land”</td>
<td>செளவர் celvar “wealthy people”</td>
<td>ஆரவன் aravan “dutiful man”</td>
<td>வணாண் vannan “man with a colour”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oblique stem</td>
<td>நா驷ன் nāṭṭaṇ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>நெசாண் neńcam “heart”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oblique suffix</td>
<td>[நா驷தன் nāṭṭiṉaṇ]</td>
<td>முகம் mukam “face”</td>
<td>முக்திணல் mukattinaṇ “woman with a face”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
noun  adjective
அampion ampu, “love”  ḍiḷiṇa ilaṁ, “young”

2.sg.  அampionκி anpinaī

3.m.  அאופிகி anpinaṭ  ḍiḷaiyōn

f.sg.  ḍiḷaiyōl

3.h.  அאופிகி anpina  ḍiḷaiyar, ḍiḷaiyōr, ḍiḷaiyavar (full pronoun)

n.pl.  அאופிதி anpinaṭu

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

1.sg.  உτaiyōn

2.sg., 2.pl., 3.sg.  utaiyōy

f.sg.  utaiyal

m.sg.  utaiyam

n.sg.  utaiyatu

1.pl.  utaiyam

2.pl.  utaiyir

3.h., 3.pl.  utaiyōr

n.pl.  utaiya
The following types of relation are well-attested:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Tamil Form</th>
<th>English Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>possessive, alienable</td>
<td>ஒஸ்தோான் ெச’வᾹ celvan</td>
<td>“he who is prosperous”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possessive, inalienable</td>
<td>பாபோாந் muṭiyināl</td>
<td>“she who has a hair knot”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>locative</td>
<td>நாடᾹ nāṭaṉ</td>
<td>“he who is from a country”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>objective</td>
<td>அளியᾀ aḷiyaḷ</td>
<td>“she who is to be pitied”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subjective</td>
<td>அறவ᾽ aṟavar</td>
<td>“they who adhere to duty”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attributive</td>
<td>பெபாிய᾽ periyar</td>
<td>“they who are big”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>முன்ற᾽ muṇnar</td>
<td>“they who are before”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that for a feminine formation the special feminine suffix -இ -i is an alternative to the pronominal ending -அீ/ஆீ aḷ/-āḷ: டொல்-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 karum kāl vēmpīṇ ol pū yāṇar
black leg Neem-tree 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 am kāl kallīyam kāṭu
pretty leg Kalli spurge forest “a pretty-trunked spurge forest”

Attribution may be marked with a possessive -ūṭai or -keḻu + a pronominalised noun:

KT 56.3 vaḷai-y-ūṭai kaiyal
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 pēr, amar maḷai kan 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. ஐய கழ ஐசயி ஐல ஐவ ஐவால்
āy kalal | cē ilai vel 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. புப பொல வண்டால் மான வரி லகும்ப குறு மகால்
pū pōl uṇ kaṇ poṇ pōl mēni
māṇ vari alkul kuru makaḷ
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 கொன்கு தர் வால்கை அம் சையா தும்பி
konku tér vālkkai am cirai 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. manavu köpp, anña nal netum küntal | akaval makalē
changk-bead string like good long tresses | Akaval woman
“sooth-saying woman with good long tresses [white] like chank beads!”

Adverbs may also be integrated:

KT 37.1 nacai perit, uṭaiyar
longing big-it(adv.) “He greatly possesses
possess-he(h.) longing.”

Adverbial phrase of place may be head nouns:

KT 138.2f. em il ayalat, ējil umpar | ... nocci
our- house neighbourhood-it ējil(-hill) beyond | ... Nocci-tree
“the Nocci tree...
beyond the ējil 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. சி்றுக் கன் வரும் கடி்ம்  கதி்ம்
சி்று கன் வரும் கடி்ம்  கதி்ம்  சற்று
ciṟu kan perum kaliru vayam puli tākki
tol muran cōrum tūṇu arum căral
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 சி்யயையும் பம்பின் கும் முதிர் ம்ய
சி்யயையும் பம்பின் கும் முதிர் ம்ய
cinai pacum pāmpin cīl mutirppu anna
"kaṇaṭṭa kaṟumpiṅ kāmpu poti avilā
nun uraḷ ali tuli talaiṭya
taṇ vaṟal vāṭai"
twig green snake\textsuperscript{10} egg ripeness like ripened- sugar-cane\textsuperscript{9} close- bud open(\textit{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 \textit{peyareccam}:

\begin{verbatim}
KT 69.1-5  கார்மன் சால்வ நீழ்ம்யூதி துற்குத்தக்
            கம்மலூ பெம்பத் காண் மாதி
            காம்ப பார்ப்பு கிளாம்பக் கோட்குத்
            பார்ப்புத்தக் கிளாம்பக் பப்புத்தக் கோட்குத்
            காண் மாத்
karum kan tā kalai perum piritu urrenā
kaimmai uyyā kāmar manti
kallā val paraḷ kiḻai-mutal cērtti
ōnku varai atukkattu pāyntu 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(\textit{voc}.)
\end{verbatim}
“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

maalappurum aathil aduthaikum muraalthu
maanai unagi koil kurum kal petai
veli verukku inam malai urenappal
pukum itan ariyathu tokupu itan kuliya
paital pillai kilai payirtaanku
innathu icakkum 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

 vaikal vaikal vaikavum vārār
ellā ellai ellaiyum tōn̄rār
yāntu ular-kollō tōlī
day day being-kept(inf.) come-not-he(h.)
all daylight edge appear-not-he(h.)
where he-is(h.) kollō 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  nerūppin anña cem talai anrīl
iravin anña koṭu vāy peṭaiyōtu
taṭavinį ōṅku cināi kaṭciyin pirintōr
kai aṟa naralum nalīṇ yāmattu
fire\(^a\) like red head Anṟil(-bird)
shrimp\(^a\) like curved mouth female-bird-with
tree\(^a\) high twig nest\(^a\) separated-they(h.)
action end(inf.) calling- deep(id.)- midnight-
“deep midnight,
when the Anṟil 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”

As a conclusion, here is a simile typical of Canka
literature, one
that has earned the poet his name Cempulappeyāṅrār:

NA 190.5-7

bee swarm- blue-water-lily paddy middle blossoming-
nectar\(^a\) field Arkkātu(p.n. of a town)- like
desirable bamboo shoulder
“[she with] desirable bamboo shoulders
who is like [the town] Arkkātu with nectary fields
where bee-swarmed water-lilies bloom amidst the
paddy”

KT 40.4f.
cem pulam peyal nīr pōla
añp₂ uṭai neñcam tām kalantaṇavē.
red soil raining water be-similar
love possess- heart self(pl.) they-mingled(n.pl.)
“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. வில்லு காலா காலை தொண்டுல்

*vilōn kālaṇa kālalē tōṭiyōl*

*bowl he leg they(n.pl.) anklet*.

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 *ūraṉ*, 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., *ūraṉ ānū*:  

KT 97.3 *tūraivaṇ tam ānūṉē*  

“*Tēkuṇam* gāṇa ānūṉē  

“*The man from the ghat is in their village.*”
KT 242.1-4  காண்ம் கோள் காவர் குரல் செய்

{kānam kōli kavar kural cēval

ol pori eruntin tan citar uraippa

putal nir vārum pū nāru puravini

cīrū urōlē maṭantai

forest fowl seize- voice rooster

bright spot neck\textsuperscript{in} cool drop drip(inf.)

shrub water overflowing- flower smell- woodland\textsuperscript{in}

little village-she\textsuperscript{e} 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  வல புளம் காட்டு நாடது மு பகாண்டு

val pulam kāṭtu nāṭatuvē appu kalantu

namvayiṇ purinta koḷkaiyotu neṇcattu

ulīṇal uraivōl ērē

hard field wilderness- land-it\textsuperscript{e} love mingled

us(loc.) desired- principle-with heart-

remembered-she remain-she village\textsuperscript{e}

“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. 

\[ \text{ஙையுடன், மண்டக்குழி} \], \[ \text{மண்டக்குழி} \]  
\[ cērppaṇai \ | yānum kātalēn \]  
coast-he(acc.) | 1\text{st} 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 \( _{\text{உைட}} \text{utai} \) has already been shown on p. 61:

KT 206.5  

\[ \text{நில்கல், நூறுதுண்டு உதர்} \], \[ \text{வெளிந்தக்குழிகு} \]  
\[ kurukal ōmpumin ariv\text{u}, utaiyirē \]  
nearing beware(ipt.) knowledge possess-you(pl.)\textsuperscript{e}  
“Beware of coming near, you who possess knowledge.”

NA 183.6-8  

\[ \text{வையுடன், வையுடன்} \], \[ \text{வையுடன்} \]  
\[ vayi, ōṟu, uṭaiyē, ōṟi, ōṟiv uṭaiyē \]  
side-every pleasant-not whipping- cold-wind-with listening- (?)  
your(pl.)- house loneliness\textsuperscript{m} evening\textsuperscript{m} possess-it\textsuperscript{e}  
“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 ali, “pity” or “love”, intriguing for the formulaic systems it is part of and to be treated under formulae in Chapter 19:

KT 30.6 tamiyēn-manra aliyēn yānē
alone-Imenā pity-I Iē
“Alone indeed, pitiable am I.”

KT 212.4f. alitō tānē kāmam
pity/love-itō selfō desire
perish-itmenā I-acheō Iē
“Pitiable it is, desire. Ah, I ache.”

[An outstanding case is NA 355.10 with the imperative அளிமதி alimati, “have pity!”, that semantically does not relate to the existing verbal root அளி ali, “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: அணியதாளா, “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 12th (?) 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 கி’-தி kil-tal, “to be able to”': யாேராபிாிகி்பவேர yārō pirikipavare, “who are those that will be able to separate?” (KT 22.2), with a regular imperfective of a 10th-class verb. In the early Vaiṣṇava Antāti-s, then, we find that type of form along with a formation like அறிகிᾸேறᾹ aṟikiṉṟē (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. They

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21 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 -\text{-kiambda\text{-ka}} -kiṉṟ- was weakened into -\text{-ki lambda\text{-ka}} -kiṟ-. 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 (absolutive 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>root</th>
<th>Perfective</th>
<th>imperfective</th>
<th>(present)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>weak</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. செய்</td>
<td>cey-тₜᵢ</td>
<td>cey-νᵢ</td>
<td>(cey-κᵲᵢᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. உல்</td>
<td>аₜᵢ</td>
<td>аₜᵢ-νᵢ</td>
<td>(аₜᵢ-κᵲᵯᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. கொல்</td>
<td>kon-тₜᵰᵯ</td>
<td>kol-νᵰᵯ</td>
<td>(kol-κᵲᵯᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. ஆண்</td>
<td>aᵣᵱᵱ</td>
<td>aᵣᵱᵱ-νᵯᵱ</td>
<td>(аᵣᵱᵱ-κᵲᵯᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. தண்கு</td>
<td>т‿ₜᵱᵱᵱ</td>
<td>тᵱᵱᵱ-νᵱᵱ</td>
<td>(тᵱᵱᵱ-κᵲᵯᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. பிடு</td>
<td>вᵱ-тₚᵱᵱ</td>
<td>вᵱ-νₚᵱᵱ</td>
<td>(вᵱ-κᵲᵯᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intermediate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. உண்</td>
<td>уₜᵢ</td>
<td>уₜᵢ-νᵱᵱ</td>
<td>(уₜᵢ-κᵲᵯᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. திண்</td>
<td>тᵱᵱᵱ</td>
<td>тᵱᵱᵱ-νᵱᵱ</td>
<td>(тᵱᵱᵱ-κᵲᵯᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. கெல்</td>
<td>кₑᵱᵱᵱ</td>
<td>кₑᵱᵱᵱ-νᵱᵱ</td>
<td>(кₑᵱᵱᵱ-κᵲᵯᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. கல்</td>
<td>кар-тₚᵱᵱ</td>
<td>кар-νₚᵱᵱ</td>
<td>(кар-κᵲᵯᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. திர்</td>
<td>тᵱᵱᵱᵱ</td>
<td>тᵱᵱᵱᵱ-νᵱᵱᵱ</td>
<td>(тᵱᵱᵱᵱ-κᵲᵯᵱᵱ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. நாட்</td>
<td>нάта-тₚᵱᵱᵱ</td>
<td>нάта-νₚᵱᵱᵱ</td>
<td>(нάта-κᵲᵯᵱᵱ)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In some classes there is a complementary relation (intransitive – transitive 4th to 11th class: ⁴Ποனு-punartal, “to unite” – ⁴Ποன_after-punartal, “to bring together”; transitive – causative 6th to 11th class: ⁶விது_viṭuṭal, “to let go”; ⁶விதுṭṭal viṭuttal, “to cause to let go”) but with the early Kīkkanakkku and bhakti corpus also a causative formation in analogy to an 11th class verb, develops: imperfective/perfective ⁴செய்/⁴செய்-ceyviku−/ceyvitu−, “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-v/p/pp-pron. suff. θεύσιμοι cey-v-ar, “they who do” [or “they do”, finite form]

2 root-p/pp-pronoun θεύσιμοι ani-p-avar, “they who adorn”

3 root-(u)n-pron. suff. θεύσιμοι col-l-un-ar, “they who speak”

4 root-um-pron.suff./pron. (late) θεύσιμοι ari-y-um-ōn, “he who knows”

perfective

1 root-nt/t/iy/(in)/tt-pron. suff. θεύσιμοι arintam, “we who knew”

2 root-nt/t/iy/(in)/tt-pronoun (late) θεύσιμοι akan-r-avar, “they who departed”

3 root-nt/ru-iciṅ-pron. suff. (except for the 5th class) θεύσιμοι ari-nt-iciṅ-ōr, “they who knew”

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

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22 The particularity of this type appears to be that the weak stem in -v- is not used; all classes employ -p- while the 11th and 12th double into -pp-.
Poruna, “warrior/dancer”. This formation even spills over to noun stems: viñaiñar, “workers”.

The most frequent basic forms are the first in each aspect, and they are ambiguous forms: varuvañ, “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 o/ō as a vowel (possible in 2nd and 3rd person animate singular as well as in 1st 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 (varukaval, “she comes”) or the suffix -an- for the perfective (cey-tu-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: viñaiñar, “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.
1st -ēṟṟ/, -ēṟṟ, -ēṟṟ -ēn/-ēn,-an
2nd -ē/, -ēē, -ēi, -ēi a-
| -ēul/-ēu -oy/-oy
3rd m. -ēṟṟ/-ēṟṟ -ēn/-ēn,
| -ēṟṟ/-ēṟṟ -oy/-ōy
3rd f. -ēṟṟ/-ēṟṟ, -ēl/-ēl
| -ēṟṟ/-ēṟṟ -ol/-ōl
3rd n. -ēṟṟ/-ēṟṟ -a/-ai

pl.
1st -ēṟṟ/-ēṟṟ, -ēṟṟ -ēn/-ēn, -ēṟṟ/-ēṟṟ, -ēn/-ēm | -ēul/-ēu -om/-ōm
2nd -ē/, -ēē, -ēi, -ēi -ir/-ēr, (-ēē -ēē)
3rd h. -ē/, -ēē, -ēi, -ēi -ar/-ēr | -ēir/-ēir -or/-ōr
3rd pl. -ēṟṟ -ēr, (-ēē -ēē)
3rd n. -ēṟṟ -ēr, -ēṟṟ -ēr a-, -ēṟṟ -a-, -ēṟṟ -ai

Note here in particular the potential ambiguity arising from the use of -ēṟṟ -an for both the first person singular and the third person singular masculine. 23

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).

23 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. mayāṅku itaḻ maḻai kuṇ payanta tūthē, “what happens to us means that he will become the neighbour of the little woman”; NA 5.9 “rain eyes with dishevelled lashes have brought forth a message”.


1.sg. i.a.  v.r.-asp. suff.-al  பொல்-
, “I resemble”

(kt 103.6)

3.pl. i.a.  v.r.-pa  என-
, “they say”

(NA 208.6)

3.sg. (m.f.n.)  v.r.-um  மல்க-
 “it increases”

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

Most grammars of Tamil would include here also the forms in -இ,\n-ா, -ா, -ா, -ா, -ku, -kam, -kum, -tum, -ti, -tir. In this\ngrammar these forms are understood as another, complementary\nparadigm and tentatively termed “subjunctive”, discussed in Chapter\n10 under “Moods”.

24 This frequent form for the high-class plural is also used occasionally as an\nhonorific: கணா கழிப  “he (the lover) passes by without seeing\n[me]” (KT 231.4).
6. Viṇaiyecam
(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 viṇaiyecam (“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 (எச்சை கொடு by எச்சை கொட்டா). 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

- perfective stem
  - இசீ செய்து, "having done"\(^{25}\)
  - புண்டு புண்டுத்து, "having united"

  5\(^{th}\) class
  - இசீய்வாசிக், "having feared"

  [special, metrically lengthened form for 5\(^{th}\) class in -uvu: இசீய்வாசிக் தைழு, "having embraced"]

2. verbal root + (p)pu

- இசீய்வாசிக் செய்பு, "having done"
  - இசீய்வாசிக் உண்பு, "having perceived"

  5\(^{th}\) class
  - இசீய்வாசிக் ஆன்பு, "having feared"

3. verbal root + -ா

- இசீய்வாசிக் சூரையா, "having done" (homophonous with the neg. abs.)

4. verbal root + -ா(u)

- இசீய்வாசிக் செய்த்தை, "having sought" (rare)

negative

5. verbal root + -ா

- இசீய்வாசிக் சூரையா (homophonous with the positive absolutive!)

6. verbal root + -ாது

- இசீய்வாசிக் செய்த்தை

7. verbal root + -ாமல

- இசீய்வாசிக் சூரையாமல் (later: from Kalittokai on)

[8. verbal root + -ாமை

- இசீய்வாசிக் சூரையாமை (homophonous to negative verbal noun; transitional form)]

\(^{25}\) Note that இசீய்வாசிக் kol-tal, “to take”, abs. இசீய்வாசிக் kontu, has, from bhakti times onwards, இசீய்வாசிக் kontu as an alternate form of the absolutive (PeTM 187.2: இசீய்வாசிக் காைக் கோட்டை பேய்த்தை, “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:

- நிங்கு/னிங்கு niṟu “from”
- கொடுக்கோது/கொட்டு koṭu/koṭu “with”
- நோக்கியோ nōkki “thanks to, in consideration of”
- பற்றி parrī “on the basis of, with respect to”

The classical absolute clause with subject identity looks like this:

KT 69.2-4

நாயனான் மண்டி கல்லுக்கு பாறறி

மண்டியான் பாறறியும் பாறறியும் பாறறியும்

ேயான் நெய் கற்றின்

ேநான் என் சற்று

நெய் என் சற்று

நெய் என் சற்று

நெய் என் சற்று

“the female monkey joins [her] untaught young one to the horde,

jumps from the side of the high mountain [and thus]

destroys [her] life.”

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

KT 4.2,4

... காண்டித் கூற்றின்... கவ்விர்

... காண்டித் கூற்றின்... நேம் நேந்தே

... eye-water endured... “enduring tears

... aches my- heart... my heart aches.”

26 Even later comes -இலிருந்து, “from”, the modern postposition of the ablative.
The relations can be ambiguous, again possibly deliberately:

KT 21.1-4 வாண்டுபடும் தமிழன் தமிழீழ விளக்கம்

 vaṇṭu paṭa tatainta koṭi inar itaiyiyupu

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

Debatable and sanctioned by the grammatical 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 குடியில் கடையில் கண்டு என்ன
ciṭar ciṉam taṇintu kuṉṟam ēra

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. சிறுது புனையல் தமிழீழ விளக்கம்
ciṟu kan perum kaliru vayam puli tākki
tol muraṇ cōrum tunu, arum cāral

little eye big elephant-bull strength tiger attacked
old antagonony diminishing- approach- difficult slope
“slope difficult to approach where the old antagonony 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

kiḻaṅku kil viḥtu tēn mēl tūnki
cīl cīla vittu pal pala vilaintu
tinai kili katiyum perum kal nātan
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 absolutive in -ū(u), also both the ceyyā and ceyyātu types for the negative absolutive:

AN 113.9f.
nalkātu turānta kātalār enrum
“if [we] sing without softening, [and] always beating the time, the lover who has abandoned us without granting [his presence]”

*ceyyā* type for the positive absolutive:

KT 341.1-3

```tamil
மட்டும் பாட்டு பாறுலை வந்து
மரமிகுத்து குமாரமித்து விளக்காள்
நித்தானித்து தனின் காலையும்
pal vē paṭṭa pacu naṇai kuravam
pori pūm puṅkoṭu poḷil anī koḷāa
ciṇai iṇitā kāiṭa kālaiyum
```

many blossom happened- green bud bottle-flower-tree be-parched- flower Puṅku-tree-with grove adornment take twig pleasant-it become(p.)- time

“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”

*ceyyāmal* type for the negative absolutive (late):

Kali 1.3

```tamil
குறழமல் കൂട്ടിക്കൊള്ളുന്ന ജീവിക്കുക കണ്ണൂർ
kūṟāmal kurittatañ mēl cellum katum 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 -ஆைம -āmai can stand in for a negative absolutive:

Kali 2.16ff. காலித்துறை வாழ்த்துச்சுளைச்சுரார்வம் முன்னுநி அதுதுநி
நெக்கூட்டம் அப்பாதிகு நூற்றாண்டில் புஃபாதிகு பெருமாடியும் கல்நாழ்
kal irantu ceyal cūnta porul porul ākumō
tol iyal vaḷāmai tuṇai ena pūrntavaḷ
pul ākam piriyāmai porul āyin allatai
stone traversed going considered- wealth wealth it-is
doold 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 fullfilled 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 அன்கு ānku and absolutive plus அன்யன anna.

The அன்கு ānku type demands an absolutive connection and quite naturally implies a change of subject:

KT 18.4f. கீத்யானையின் விளம்புப்பு கரமில்பாண்டின்
ஏனுற்றுதை திருத்து அரமணா மூடாது.
“Like a big fruit hanging on a small twig, her life is very small, [her] desire, ah, it is big.”

The அங்கா அங்கா type generally, though not always, corresponds to a peyareccam connection, as such justifying the question whether the analysis as absolutive plus அங்கா அங்கா 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 nilam parantanna punkanottu
ground spread-like sorrow
“sorrow that is as if spread on the ground”

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

KT 42.2f. karuvi maalai viinte na aruvi
viṭar akattu 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 absolutive plus -ஆஞ் -uttaṇ in the sense of “as soon as”:

NA 63.3f.

 пуṇṇai

viḻavu nāṟum vilāṇku, inār virintuṭaṇ kamaḻum

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, 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 பாத்த பாத்த பாத்த, 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 imperfective stem classes 9-12:
   ச௯்வு ச௯்வு ச௯்வு ச௯்வு, “to do”
   பொழை பொழை, “to stand” (later பொழை nirkā)
   பொழை பொழை, “to end” (later பொழை tirkka)

2. -மரம் -மரம், “in order to give” (less frequent)

3. -ய -ய இய -ய, “in order to see”
   (often with alapeṭai) இய -ய, “in order to eat”

4. -மகதம் -மகதம், “in order to chase”
   (often with alapeṭai) மகதம் -மகதம், “in order to give”

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

28 I.e., the metrically lengthened form explained in Chapter 20.
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 (-iyy) and type 4 (-iyale) are homophonous with the optative, type 3 as well as to the perfective peyareccam of the 5th class. Type 5 (-vam/-vam) is homophonous with the imperfective masculine singular.

A number of verbs take an infinitive:

KT 114.3 cela viyam koṇmō

"take the order to go!"

The normal resultative function is “so that”

KT 65.1-3 val paral tel aral parukiya iralai tan

"water drunk- Iralai[-deer] own-

soft pebble become-clear- rain dried-up jump(inf.)

self it-came 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 கட்டி குறுகிய குட்டி மூர்தியான மார்கள்
நிலரங்க ஒருபோற் மாடே
நான் தைட திகக்கான

cuṭar ciṇam taṁintu kunram cēra
patar cumant₉ elutaru paiyul mālai
yānt₉ uḷar-kollō
sun anger decreased hill join(inf.)
affliction laden rise- give- sorrow evening
where he-is(h.)kollō
“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. ... கத்திக் குறிப்பிட்டியதை
காதல் கண்டை கவளை காதை
... koṭiyōr nāvē
kātalar akala kalennavē
... cruel-they tongueᵉ
lover(h.) depart(inf.) ‘kal’-they-said(n.pl.)ᵉ
“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.

oru nīn pānāṉ poyyaṉ āka
ulla pānará 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

konkaṉ ūrnta koṭūnći netum tēr
tel kaṭal atai karai telī maṉī olippa
kāna 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”
-மா் -mār:

KT 155.5f. ேூே௕ைமா் கணேமணமா்

mālai nāṇi viruntu ayarmār
tēṟ 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”

-இய் -iya:

KT 269.4-6 ேூே௕ைேிய்

uppay māri vel nel tariya
uppu vilai kaḷāṇi cēṇaṇaḷ
mother
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.”

-இயா் -iyar:

KT 141.1f. ேூே௕ைேூே௕ைா் கணேூே௕ைா்
valai vāy ciru kilē vilai tinai kāṭiyar | 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.”

-வாள் -vāy(-u)�ாள் -(p)pān:

Pari 7.57 அவளை கை பிணை நிக்குவன் பாய்வாள்
avalai kai piṇai nikkuvān pāyvāl
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 வாள் வாள் வாளும் வாழ்த்த
vaikal vaikal vaikavum vārār
ellā ellai ellaiyum tōnṟār
yānt, uḷar-kollō tōli
day day being-kept(inf.) come-not-he(h.)
all daylight edge appear-not-he(h.)
where he-is(h.) 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 ullurai, “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**  

**modal**  

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29The only postposition that forms a temporal clause with an absolutive, not with a peyareccam, is உழி – uli, a construction not yet found in the Caṅkam corpus: Cilap 11.14 இறுக்கையுடன் இல்லாத குழு முக்கால் புக்கு – uli, “when they entered the seat in the forest with young trees”.

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The formation of the *peyareccam*:

**perfective pey.**  
5th class: past stem + $a$  
$\text{அாசியா் அ்யா்த மா்}$, “that did”  
($\text{அாசியா் அ்யா்த மா்}$) “that feared”  
$\text{னா்ா்த உா்த-தா்}$, “that informed”

**imperfective pey.**  
imperf. stem + $-um$  
$\text{அாசியா் அ்யா்த மா்}$, “that does/will do”  
($\text{அாசியா் அ்யா்த மா்}$) “that fears/will fear”  
$\text{னா்ா்த உா்த-க்கு்}$, “that informs, will inform”

**[present pey.]**  
root + $-kñra$  
$\text{அாசியா் அ்யா்த மா்}$, “that does”

**negative pey.**  
root + $-ā$  
$\text{அாசியா் அ்யா்த மா்}$, “that does not”

**negative pey.**  
root + $-āta$  
$\text{அாசியா் அ்யா்த மா்}$, “that does not”

p.a. attributive:

KT 77.3  
$\text{ஓ்யா் அ்யா்த மா்}$  
$\text{உள்ள் கா்தர்}$  
“dead travellers”

KT 35.3  
$\text{கா்ா்த கா்தர்}$  
$\text{கா்ா்த கா்தர்}$  
“ripe sugar cane”

p.a. in minor clauses:

KT 86.1  
$\text{ச்சித்த்த் புன்்ா்த க்்யா்க்் க்த்்}$  
$\text{ச்சித்த் புன்்ா்த க்்யா்க்் க்த்்}$  
“check- dew broken- red streak rain eye”
“red-streaked rain eyes from which the checked tears broke forth”

KT 79.1f. கானயாைன் யாைன் யாைன் யாைன் யாைன் யாைன்

kāṇam yāṇai tōl nayantu, unṭa
pori tāl oṁai vali 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. புலாம் தீர் யாைன் கோட்டு இதை சின்ன

pulam tēr yāṇai kōṭtu itai olīnta
cīru vi mullai kompiṇḍ
field search-elephant horn(obl.) middle stayed-behind-
little blossom jasmine twig
“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 குருது யாைன் யாைன் யாைன் யாைன்
kurukum unṭu tān maṇanta ṇāṁṟē
heron it-is he united-time
“the heron was there at the time he united [with me].”
adverbial clauses for anterior time ("before") with negative peyareccam:

KT 352.5f. 🉑ᾀάᾱαίϲϡapollo
副教授.Thread.
апу.Threading._faults или alumno

 ciṟu pul mālai uṁmai
arivēn ṭōli avar kānā-v-ṁkē
little empty evening existence
know-I friend he(h.) see-not-before
“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 ṅmGREEK.Subjunctive ... ṃ.LEFT Subjunctive

peru nakai ākiṇē ... itar urraguru
big laughter it-became ... affliction experienced-way
“It became big laughter, ... the way [he] experienced affliction.”

i.a. attributive:

KT 58.1 ṅtikum kēlir
admonishing- friends “admonishing friends”

i.a. minor clause:

KT 143.2 paḻiyum aṅcum payam malai nāṟaṇ
blame“im 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 tiṇai tāl anṇa ciru pacum kāla
olūku 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 kāṇam manṭṭai arai in muṭṭai
veyl āṭu mucuviṇ kuruḷai uruṭṭum
kunram nāṭan
forest peacock rock bring-forth egg
sunlight play- langurii 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. kaḷaṇi māṭṭu vilaint, uku tīm paḷam
*palanam vālai katūm ūraṇ*
paddy-field mango-tree(obl.) ripened shed- sweet fruit
pond Vālai(-fish) seizing- village-he
“man from a village where the Vālai 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

*neṭum kai val mān kaṭum pakai uḷanta
kurum kai irum puli kōḷ val ēṟrai
paim kaṇ cem-nāy paṭu patam pārkkum
āṟu iruḷ naṭu-nāḷ varuti*
clearing
long hand strong stag fierce enmity borne-
short hand dark tiger taking strong male
green eye red dog happen- carcas 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 carcas 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)”
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*tōṟum* comparison clause:

KT 47.1f.  கையாற்றி வந்துகல் இறுது துணை

கையாற்றி வந்துகல் இலையைப் பீடமாக காண்க.

karum kāl vēnkai vī uku turu kal

irum puli kurulaiyin *tōṟum* kāṭu iṭai

black leg Vēnkai blossom shed - thick stone
dark/big tiger young 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 3rd persons singular (m./f./n.) as well as the neuter plural.

m.sg.

KT 8.2+6  உரண ... | மேவா செய்யம் தன் புதலவன் தாய்கே

ūran ... | mēvaṇa ceyyum tan putalvaṇ tāykkē

village-he ... | wish-they(n.pl.) he-does self- son

mother(dat.)

“The man from the village does what is wished for by the mother of his son.”
f.sg.
KT 45.4  மருவரம் சிவுவன் தாய்
maruvarum ciyavan tāyē
is-upset little-he mother
“The mother of the little one is upset.”

n.pl.
KT 193.6  முல்லை முகை நாருமே
inru mullai mukai nārumē
today jasmine bud they-are-fragrant
“Today the jasmine buds are fragrant.”

n.sg. (or pey.)
KT 4.1  என் நெசே என் நெசே
nōṁ en nečē nōṁ en nečē
it-aches my heart it-aches my heart
“Oh, my heart aches, my heart aches.”

KT 6.3f.  பலகை பல மண்ணு துண்டு
palai pal mana tuṇcūn
wide place world sleeping-one
“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 (Absolutive, 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 (N₁-v.r.-N₂). 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 absolutive, infinitive and verbal noun [Wilden 2016]. Moreover it is used with some auxiliaries such as taru-tal or kil-tal (வைரிழதΆΆநி varai ili-tarum aruvi, “a waterfall that tumbles from the mountain”), and finally also with the indefinite ஓத᾿ம᾿ஏதΆ xeimal oṭal malku-torūm, “whenever the flood increases” (KT 9.5).

attributive without aspectual impact: ஓந்திகுமலை oṭinku malai, “high mountain”
attributive for pey. p.a.: AN 1.4 அறு kōṭu, “broken tusk”
attributive for pey. i.a.: KT 299.4 புநர் kuri, “sign for uniting”
Verbal Root

minimal clause for pey. p.a.:

KT 79.2  வளிெபாᾞெநᾌᾴςிந vaḷi poru neṭum ciṉai
wind beat- long branch  “long branch beaten by the wind”

KT 118.3  பல᾽ᾗᾁவாயி́palar puku vāyil
many(h.) enter- door  “a door entered by many”

minimal clause for pey. i.a.:

KT 7.6  வேயᾼலᾹvēla ṉ puṇainta veṟi ayar kaḷam-
to rŭm
bamboo rustle- thicket  “thicket rustling with bamboo”

KT 150.3  சாᾸᾐ })).களcāntu pular akalam
sandal dry- chest  “chest on which sandal dries”

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

KT 53.3  வேலᾼயைனᾸத் கய᾽களvēla puṇainta veri ayardu kalam-torum
spear-he practised- Veři-dance immerse- floor-ever
“on every dance floor where they are immersed in the Veři dance practiced by the spear-bearing [priest]”

KT 163.1-5  பு்ியar
pūliyar
ciru talai vellai tōṭu parantaṇṇa
mīn ār kurukīn kāñalam perum tūrai
vel vi tālai tirai alai
nalēn kāṅkulum

Pūliyar(h.)
little head goat multitude spread-like
fish become-full- egret like seashore-grove- big ghat
white blossom screwpine wave slap-
deep(id.)- night
“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  அண்டைய் மெல்லியாள்  anāi melliyal
touch- soft-she “she is soft to touch”

NA 108.2c-3  கடும்காலம் மாணவார
துண்டம் காண்யானை
kāṭum kan yāṇai
anaiya kānta am kuti kūṟavar
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”
Verbal Root

KT 398.8  கன் களின் உகுண்நி  kan kalil uku paî
eye weep- shed- dew  “dew shed while the eyes weep”

verbal root for verbal noun:

KT 132.5  தாய் கன் விருப்பு  tay kan viruppen
mother see yearning  “with yearning to see the mother”

AN 66.11ab  கன்றல் விருப்பு  kantul viruppoțu
seeing desire-with  “with the desire to see”

KT 88.3  துன்னன் அரும் காருல  tunn arum cāral
approach- difficult slope  “a slope difficult to approach”

KT 344.7  பெரல் அரும் பூருல  peral arum porul
obtaining difficult wealth  “wealth difficult to obtain”

But see also:

Tē 1.73.9.1  அண்டம் அதியும் காரும் அரியல் பொல் antam āti aya um arul ariyal
end beginning Aya who(dat.) knowledge difficult-who  “As for beginning [and] end, he is difficult to know for Brahmā, Māl and everybody.”

verbal root for absolutive:

KT 134.5  கன்றல் விருப்பு  kantul viruppoțu
haste- descend- waterfall  “a hastily descending waterfall”

AN 19.13cd  கன்று வில் அருவி  kantaḷtu vil avir arul
hastened descend- shine- water  “hastily descending shining water”
KT 86.2b-3c  நோயோடு புலாம்பு ஆலை கலாங்கி

மிரும் கெட்டாண் கேளிக்கின்

nōyōtu pulampu alai kalaṅki

piṟarum kētkunar ular-kol

pain-with loneliness harass-agitated

otherum hear-they(h.) they-are(h.)kol

“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  சேய் வியை “the work to be done”

NA 24.8  சேய் போர்ல் “the wealth to be made”

TV 2.4  தோல் நிரை அதி “the foot pair of a nature to be worshipped”
9b. Verbal Noun

Verbal nouns in -அ᾿ -al and -(த)ெசய᾿ -tal may be used as nomina actionis and as verbal complements, for example with வெண்டுதல் vēntutal, “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 -உட் -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 -அ᾿ -al is homophonous with the negative imperative: சய᾿ ceyal, “doing” or “don’t do”. To express anteriority there is a perfective verbal noun in -அைய -amai. The negative verbal noun is formed with the verbal root plus -அயாம -āmai. A very different type is formed in homophony with the participial noun n.sg., both perfective and imperfective (ெசயாம/ெசயாதா சய் தா/ெசயாதா சயதா), 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal root + -al</td>
<td>சய் ceyal, “doing”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal root + (t)tal</td>
<td>சய் ceytal, “doing”, சய் cel-tal, “going”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfective stem + -amai</td>
<td>சய் ceyamai, “having done”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal root + -āmai (neg.)</td>
<td>சய் ceyāmai, “not doing”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perfective n.sg.</td>
<td>சய் ceyatu, “doing” (homophonous to part.n. n.sg.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfective n.sg.</td>
<td>சய் ceyatu, “doing” (hom. to part.n. n.sg.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some verbal nouns are lexicalised like simple nouns: உண்கல் \textit{uṇkal}, lit. “drying”, but used to refer to something dried such as fish or corn. There are examples without clear etymology such as பைட் \textit{paital}, “suffering”.

\textit{nomen actionis}:  
KT 353.3 அதுடலிடு அதுடலிடே \textit{āṭul iṇite}  
“bathing is pleasant”

\textit{verbal complement}:  
KT 79.8 அகற் வாணீ அகற் வாணீ \textit{akaṟal valluvōrē}  
“those who are able to depart”

\textit{final, especially if marked as dative}:  
KT 100.7 மண்டல் காய் பைண்டே மண்டல் காய் பைணேதாேள \textit{maṇattarka ariya paṇai perum tōḷē}  
“they are difficult to unite with, the big bamboo shoulders.”

\textit{attributive}:  
KT 79.3 அலான்கல் உலவை \textit{alāṅkal ulavai}  
“swaying twig”

KT 35.5 தாண் வரல் வாள் \textit{taṇ varal vāṭai}  
“cool coming north wind”

KT 28.4 அலமர் அசவளி \textit{alamar acai vaḷi}  
“whirling moving wind”

[\textit{figura etymologica}:  
KT 276.4 அரிளம் அரியார \textit{aritalum ariyār}  
“they don’t know at all”]
From the bhakti period onwards, a verbal noun plus -um can be used as a temporal clause: “as soon as”

TVM 4.6.10.3f.  
val tuvarāpati

manṇaṇai ēttumī ēttutalum tolulū ṣūmē

generous Dvāravatī

king praise(ipt.) praising worshipped dancing- [she]

“Praise the generous king of Dvārakā;
as soon as you praise [him] she will dance in worship.”

The oblique of the verbal noun in -ā/(-)ālū -alin/-talin can form temporal/conditional clauses: “when, upon”

KT 167.5f.  
initu ena kaṇavan ūṇṭalin

nunṇitūn makiḻntuṅ ol nutal mukanē
sweet-it say(inf.) husband eating

fine-it 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  
kalaṭtalai avar ārralarē
removing(acc.) he(h.) able-not-he(h.)

“he is not able to remove.”
the perfective verbal noun:

NA 282.4 காதல் உண்டி அறியவுடன்
kātalaṉ tantamai ariyātu
lovers having-given know-not

“not knowing that the lover has given”

KT 92.2,5 பறைவா | ... | பறைவா உண்டி விரையுமல்
paravai | ... | irai konṭamaiyin viraiyumāl celavē
bird | ... | food having-taken not hurrying-al going

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

the negative verbal noun in -ஆம் -āmai:

NA 50.1 அறியாமையின் அண்ணாயா அந்தி
arīyāmaiyiṇ aṉṉai aṉci
not-knowing mother feared

“being afraid of mother for her not knowing”

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

Tē 1.80.1.1f. கற்னீர் எரி எதிற்று வாரமே
karrāṅkē eri o mpi kāliyai vārāmē
cerrār vāl 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  அம்பல் முது உரிதல்வி
அம்பல் ஆரிதல்வி அம்பல் உரிதல்வி
ampal mūt, ār ārintatu
nōy ākīnyatu nōyinum peritē.
rumour old village knowing
pain became-it painimm big-it$^5$.
“That the gossiping old village should know
has become a pain greater than pain.”

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

KT 377.4f.  நாடெனா் வா்ற
ெச்வி’ வா்ற வா்றம் ணா
ெகா்தெதா் சி்ன
nāṭatōtu
ceytu koṇtatōr ciru nal natpē
land-he-with
made taken-it one little good friendship$^6$
“A good little friendship that has been made
with the man from the land.”$^{30}$

verbal noun in place of a finite verb:

PV 172.2f.  தேவுனீந் | அவியார் அவியார் தேவுனீந் தேவுனீந்
ceyuvi | valiyār valiyār āy man ālvatu

$^{30}$Note that this is an early example also of the auxiliary கண்டால் kol-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 தெசய᾿ ceyal or the தெசᾼத᾿ ceyal types, but this is more frequently found in theoretical texts:

TC 19i

iyarkai porulai ipp ena kilattal

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 (2nd person)

1a verbal root எழு ெ “rise!” (KT 11.4)
1b (plural) v.r. + -ir ஓர் colīr “speak!” (Tē 2.2.8.3) post-Caṅkam

2. -m-ō/-eṇa ஓணிட்டும் molimō “speak!” (KT 2.2)
   ஓலிட்டு telimē “let it be clear!” (KT 273.8)

3. -min உம்புமிட்டு āmūnimm “beware!” (KT 184.2)

4. -mati இந்தமிட்டு mānmati “despair!” (KT 19.3)

5. -āy க்கைழிட்டு kēḷāy “hear!” (KT 390.1)

6. v.r. + -um ஓல்லும் collum “speak!” (PK 4.3) post-Caṅkam

negative imperative (2nd person)

7. v.r. + -al உண்டு cellal “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 -kal(ē) may be added to type 1b and 3: உண்டு kal(ē) uraiyērkal, “tell” (TVM 9.7.10.1),
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அறிமிᾹகேள aṟimiṉkaḷ, “know” (PK 201.4). Type 2 ending in simple -ū -m is always followed by a particle -ē or -ē, unless embedded in direct speech with ஏன aṇa. Type 5 in -ṟūi -āy is homophonous with the negative 2nd person singular: கட்டு kūṟāy, “you don’t talk” or “talk!” Type 7, the negative imperative, is homophonous with the short form of the verbal noun: நெசய் neceyal, “doing” or “don’t do!” Later further imperative suffixes such as -ா் -min may be added to the negative imperative: நெசய் nūṭañmiṇ “don’t approach!” (Cint 799.4).

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

The early bhakti texts and Kīḻkkaṇakku 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 2nd person: கடா் kaṇṭāy, pl. கடி் 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 vāḻiya “may you live” (KT 19.3)
2. -iyar இறீஇயேரா iṟīiyarō “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 -mr -iyar adds a particle -ē, perhaps of politeness.

An isolated survivor of the same form in the first person plural may be உைர்க்கும் uraikkiyam, “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 + -இசిం -ici

It is used predominantly for 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd}, but occasionally also for 3\textsuperscript{rd} person. As a rule of thumb it goes with a 2\textsuperscript{nd} person unless another person is specified by adding a pronoun: உைரأتي -ici -ic, “may you speak, heart” (KT 63.2), but உைரأتي ... யாேன -ici -ic, “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 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 உையாேன evan ceykō,
   “what will/can I do?” (KT 25.2)

2.sg. -titi உையாேயாேயாே evai uyttiyō,
   “will you send us?” (KT 63.4)

3.sg. -ka உையாேவாேவாேவாே vallē varuka,
   “let him come fast” (KT 111.5f.)

1.pl. -kam உைகளவு களவு களவு nūkam cirītē,
   “we may be a little ashamed” (KT 14.6)

-kum உைகளவு களவு களவு kēkum nūn kuralē,
   “we can hear your voice” (KT 163.5)
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-\textit{tum} \ தமிழ் \ என்று \ என்று \ evvali \ aritum, \ “how \ can \ we \ know?” (KT \ 40.3)

2.pl. -\textit{tir} \ தேசறிேரா \ cēriō, \ “will \ you \ go?” (KT \ 268.1)

3.pl. -\textit{ka} \ பல்சம்பாளும் \ palarum \ kūra, \ “let \ many \ people \ talk” (KT \ 170.1)

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

However, already in the \ Caṅkam \ corpus \ itself \ “modern” \ optative \ forms \ occur \ where \ -\textsl{ti} \ -\textit{ka} \ can \ be \ used \ for \ all \ persons \ and \ numbers:

KT 14.2f. \ கோஞ்சீர்ரியும் \ இல்லையும் \ முடிந்து \ வாழும் \ கொரீ | peruka-tillamma \ yānē
few \ word \ girl(acc.) \ may \ obtain\tillamma \ I
g

“Ah, let me obtain the girl of few words!”

KT 23.3 \ வாழும் \ இல்லையும் \ முடிந்து \ வாழும் \ கொரீ
akaval \ makaḷē \ pāṭuka \ pāṭē
c

Akaval \ woman\n\n“soothsaying \ woman, \ please \ sing \ a \ song!”

Moreover, the 2\textsuperscript{nd} person singular in -\textsl{ti} \ -\textit{ti} \ sometimes \ goes \ in \ the \ direction \ of \ a \ request \ and \ is \ counted \ by \ most \ modern \ grammars \ among \ the imperative suffixes:

KT 63.2 \ கோஞ்சீர்ரியும் \ இல்லையும் \ முடிந்து \ வாழும் \ கொரீ
cey \ vinai \ kai \ mika \ ēṇnuti
do- \ work \ action \ much \ consider-you
g
c

“Consider \ well \ the \ work \ to \ be \ done!”

(139x677)
The corresponding negative forms certainly seem to go in the direction of a negative optative:

\[ \text{v.r.-al-ka} \quad \text{va-nt-ika} \quad \text{vārarka-tilla}, \quad \text{“may you not come”} \quad (\text{KT}198.8) \]

\[ \text{v.r.-ā-ti} \quad \text{citaivāti}, \quad \text{“may you not waste”} \quad (\text{AiAi}42.4) \]

In the bhakti corpus, hybrid forms of indicative and subjunctive are found:

\[ \text{ēnt-ūtikā} \quad \text{tirumakaṭkē}, \quad \text{“what can I do for my splendid daughter?”} \quad (\text{TVM}7.2.8.4), \quad \text{a clear sequel to the Caṅkam formula} \quad \text{aṇṭōṇ ṣtūṭi \varepsilonμετα \varepsilonν ceykō, “what can I do?”}. \]

A presumable periphrastic construction of a perfective stem plus \[ \varepsilonμετα \text{ “to give”}, \quad \text{as root imperative or optative, is in existence, though rare:} \quad \text{va-nt-ika}, \quad \text{“come!”} \quad (\text{NA}221.12), \quad \text{also attested with a short vowel} \quad \text{cēnt-ika}, \quad \text{“go!”} \quad (\text{NA}321.8). \quad \text{Corresponding forms continue in the early Kiṅkankukku, Kalittokai and} \]

\[ \text{Ciappatikāram:} \quad \text{va-nt-ī, “come!”} \quad (\text{Kali}85.20), \quad \text{vant-ika, “may you come!”} \quad (\text{Kali}86.10), \quad \text{el-nt-ika, “may you rise!”} \quad (\text{AiE}55.2), \quad \text{kāy-nt-ī-y-al, “don’t be angry!”} \quad (\text{AiE}7.1), \quad \text{kēnt-īmin, “listen!”} \quad (\text{Cilap}21.40). \quad \text{The negative counterpart, based on negative absolute plus} \quad \text{vānt-ī, is fairly common in the} \]

\[ \text{Caṅkam corpus:} \quad \text{vānt-ī-y-al, “don’t come!”} \quad (\text{KT}390.2), \quad \text{varātīmē, “don’t come!”} \quad (\text{NA}336.11). \]

\[ \text{In an intermittent period of Kiṅkankaṇku into the bhakti period -ēl may be added to verbal roots and even finite forms in order to express a negative imperative:} \quad \text{pōkēl, “don’t go!”} \quad (\text{TVM}10.3.8.1), \quad \text{but also, and here with a 1st person plural,} \quad \text{collutumēl, “let us not speak!”} \quad (\text{PK}297.1), \quad \text{kāy-nt-ī-y-ēl, “don’t be angry!”} \quad (\text{AiE}7.1v). \]
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 -ஓอะ_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 -ஓอะ_um also coordinates sentences. A question may be marked, first of all, by an interrogative pronoun, often in combination with -ஓē to mark the end of the sentence or to focalise. The old interrogative particles are -அราว -ō and -ஆைஞா -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 ஆைஞாவைஞா kollō, while -அราว coordinated with another -அราว -ō marks an “either-or” question. Note that from bhakti times onwards -ஓē can also be used to mark a question, and very rarely -ஆā (the modern interrogative) can be seen in the same function.

-ஓอะ_um, “and” enclitic, coordinates not only nouns and clauses, but also sentences; on all members or only on the last

interrogative pronoun question

-ஓē end of a question and focalisation

-அราว -ō question (of evaluation)

-ஆைஞா -kol question (of information)

ஆைஞாவைஞா kollō rhetorical question

-ஓē interrogative particle in bhakti texts
noun coordination with -உ- -um:

KT 20.1 arulum anpum nikki
considerationum loveum discarded
“having discarded consideration and love”

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

KT 190.1 negi irum katuppoṭu penum tōl nivi
curl- dark hair-with big shoulder stroked
“stroking the big shoulders and the curly dark hair”

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

Poy 29.1f. iraiyum nilaṉum iru vicumpum kārrum
arai puṉalum cem tiyum āvān
lordum groundum dark skyum windum
dash- floodum red fireum he-becomes
“The lord, the ground, the dark sky, the wind
the dashing flood and the red fire is he.”

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

Pēy 76.1f.+4 yeppalppiḷḷanēm iraiyum puṟukkumēm kūppumēm
eyyaippalppiḷḷanēm yeppalppiḷḷanēm iraiyum āvān...
“... yeppalppiḷḷam iraiyum puṟukkumēm kūppumēm”
“Without that you must stand on heights, bathe in floods and stand between five fires, ... [your] evil deeds will dwindle [and] pass away.”

When -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  மாற்றும் பாதன மிக்க மந்தை ...
பெருந்தவு கருடயும் பாதன மிக்க மந்தை
yānum or āṭukaḷam makaḷē ...
pīṭu keḻu kuricilum or āṭukaḷam makaṉē
I’m one dance-floor daughter two ... excellence have- lord one dance-floor son three
“I am a woman on the dance floor ... and the excellent lord is a man on the dance floor.”

KT 51.3-6  சேர்ப்பாறை
மாற்று காதல்வதற்கு மாற்று மந்தை
பெருந்தவு கருடயும் பாதன மிக்க மந்தை
மாம் உள்ள சேர்ப்பாறை சேர்ப்பாறை
cērppanai
yānum kātaiṇ yāyum nāṇi veyya!
entaiyum koṭiyar vēṭum
ampal ārum avanōtu mōlimē

cost-he(acc.)
I° love-I my-mother°° abundant hot-she
my-father°° give must(hab.fut.)
rumour village°° he-with it-speaks°
“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 (°-°-°° added to the first foot of the
line).

KT 17
mā eṇa maṭalum ārup pū eṇa
kuvi muki erukkam kaṇṇiyum cūṭupa
marukin ārkavum pāṭupa
piriṭum ākupa kāmam kālkkoliṇē
horse say Palmyra-stem°° they-mount flower say
heap- bud Yarcum chaplet°°° they-wear
street°° shout°°°°° they-suffer
other-it°°°°° they-become desire coming-to-a-climax-if°
“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. 

�᾽ᾰᾁmandi mActivity ὀῤῥṳ postpone ὀῤῥ昶וי arkkum anittē poykai poykaikku
cēyttum anyē ciru kān yārē
village(dat.)um close-itē pond pond(dat.)
distance-itum not-so-itē little forest riverē
“Close to the village is the pond and from the pond not far is the little forest river.”

-ε-um only on the second member:

KT 62.4f. 

nallōl mēni
muriyinum vāyvatu muyaṅkarkum inītē
good-she body
shootium more-excellent-it embracing(dat.)um pleasant-itē
“The body of the good one, it surpasses a sprout [in softness] and is pleasant to embrace.”

KT 74.2f.,5

kunram nāṭaŋ
Coordination and Question

yām tan paṭantamai ariyān tānum ...
cāviṇāṇaṇ eṇpa

hill land-he
we him- thought-we(acc.) know-not-he selfam ...
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

poḻutum el iṉṟu peyalum ōvātu
kalụtum kan paṇippa vicaṃ atanṟalai ...  
aṅgā ennum annaiyum aṅnō

timeam light is-not rainingam stop-not-it
demon eye shiver throwing- that(obl.+loc.) ...  
mother(voc.) saying- motheram 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

this whatē  “What is this?”
Who are those who understand that?

What has it understood of the trouble, this noisy village?

Shall I attack? Shall I strike?

Will he come today, o friend?

Is that, friend, the pain of desire?

Is that, friend, the pain of desire?
Coordination and Question

this friend our-lover marriage

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

KT 2.4f.

arivai kūntali
nariyavum ulo nē ariyum pūvē
young-woman tresses
fragrant-they(n.pl.) you-knowing-flowers

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

Double -ō can be employed for either-or:

KT 142.2f.
pūm kan pētai
tān arintaṇalō ilalō
flower eye innocence
self she-knew not-she

“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 ūllār-kollō:

KT 16.1
remember-not-he(h.)

“Does he not remember, friend?”
KT 279.4  

இᾐெபாᾨ
tu poḻut, ākavum vārār-kollō  
“Although the time is this, will he not come?”

KT 180.5  

ெகா᾿ேலா

“Did he obtain it – wealth?”

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

Poy 95.2f.  

mūvāta | mā kati-kaṇ cellum vakai ūṇē  
“Is there a means to go on the ageless great way?”
12. Embedded Clauses with ākutal, ennūtal 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: காட் kāṇ, “see!”, என்பை enpa, “they say”), a murreccam (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 eṉ, “to say”
  - verbal root (என் en), infinitive (என் enu),
  - absolutive (என் enu), perfective peyareccam (என் enu), finite forms [occasionally other verba dicendi]: direct speech or thought

- ஏக் āku, “to become”
  - verbal root (அ ஏக் ā), absolutive (அ ஏக்/அ ஏக் āki/āy),
  - infinitive (அ ஏக் āka), perfective peyareccam (அ ஏக்/அ ஏக் āya/ākya),
  - verbal noun (அ ஏக்/அ ஏக் ākāl/ākutal): concomitance and attribution (“when”, “since”, “that”)

- பொன் pōl, “to be similar”
  - verbal root (பொன் pōl), absolutive (பொன் pōlu), infinitive (பொன் pōru),
  - perfective peyareccam (பொன் pōru), perfective peyareccam (பொன் pōru): comparative clause; habitual future (பொன் pōlu): “it seems that”

Direct speech or thought:

KT 82.2 அழால் ஏல் என்லு நம்லல் அலட்டு கண் துடாப்பார்

aḷāal enru nam aḷuta kāṇ 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  
vaḷai vāy ciṟu kilī vilai tiṇai kaṭīyar  
celka enṟōḷē annai ena nī  
collīvu evanō töli

curve- mouth little parakeet ripen- millet chase(inf.)
may-go said-she§ mother say(inf.) you
say-if what§ 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  
valiṟū yēnaṟu meliyum en neṟcē

hard-he say-not softening-it my- heart§
“Without saying ‘he is hard’ my heart is softening.”

The quotative verb enṟutal may on occasion be replaced by an other verbum dicendi:

KT 148.6  
kanaṟo maṟṟa ḍu viṟavaḷu yēnē

dream§maṟṟu this I-ask I§
“‘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 பகலைம் கவாளி மாலைம்
சூரைதங்க மாலையும் விழானில்
எம்பாடாசூரையும் விழாநிலைக்கு கொண்டு
kālaiyum pakalum kai aru mālaiyum
ūr tuṅcu yāmanum vitiyalum enga i
polutt, ītai teriyin poyyē kānam
morningum middayum action cease- eveningum
village sleep- midnightum dawnum said this-
time-of-day between distinguish-if lie 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.மாறிய மடலம் பேரம். பெரியத்
குளிய போலேத் காணித்து கூறிக்காடு
mā ena maṭalum ārpa. pū ena
kuvi mukil erukkam kaṇṇiyum cūtapa
horse say(inf.) Palmyra-stem they-mount flower say(inf.)
heap- bud Yarcum chaplet 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  வையம் தகளியை வாக் கடேல் யாக்
ெவ்வயகதி விளக்காக – எச்சாய்
ஆடர நெக் அத்தின் கொலம்கைலை
earth bowl become- flow- sea oil become(inf.)
hot ray-he light become(inf.) red
glow- discus-he foot(dat.)  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  அகா aka 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.  யான் தான் உற்றானது அகா
I him(dat.) I-told become(inf.)
he he was ashamed
“When I told him
he himself became ashamed.”

“so that”

KT 172.3f.  அழும் உடன் மின்வால குறிக்காண்டு
he told with word garland
he told with word garland
emiyan āka ḍikku turantōr
			tamīyar āka iniyar-kollō
our-we become(inf.) here abandoned-he(h.)
alone-he(h.) become(inf.) pleasant-he(h.)kollō
“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 பயின் ஞானான் மந்திரம் தொன்மை தோட்டம்
payil iruḷ natunāl tuyil arti, āki ...
be-dense- darkness midnight sleep difficult-it
become(a.)...
goood blossom rain eye(dat.) easy-they(n.pl.)śi dewś
“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. இன்றுனித்தானை க்கு என்று தொழிலியோ
inru nī ivanai āki enmoṭu
taṅṅin evanō teyya
today you here-you become(abs.) us-with
stay-if whatteyya
“Since you are here today,
what if you stayed with us, please?”
The perfective peyareccham ஆய/ஆக்கையா ஆய/ஆக்கையா can be used for specified attribution.

**KT 181.1,7**

இாமி எறவேனாேதாழி...

ITU-marru evaṇo töli...

peru mutu pentirēṃ ākiya namakkē

this what friend...

big old women-we become(p.)- us(dat.)

“What is this, friend to us who have become great old women?”

**temporal clause**

**KT 178.5-7**

yām numakk u ariyam ākiya kālai

periya nōṇṟaṇir.

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 ஆக்/ஆக்கு ஆக்கு/ஆக்கு can be found to express indirect speech or thought content: “that”

**KT 386.4-6**

mālai
nilam parantanna punkanoțu
pulampu utatt, ākutal ariyēn yānē
evening
ground spread-like sorrow-with
loneliness possess-it becoming know-not-I I
“That the evening would possess loneliness
along with sorrow as if spread on the ground
I did not know.”

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

KT 147.3f. நுன் புன் மாண்டாயையை தான்யே போல
fine ornament girl(acc.) given-you be-similar(inf.)
pleasant sleep you-arouse(sub.) dream
“As if you brought [my] girl with fine ornaments
you would rouse [me] from sweet sleep, dream.”

AN 177.13 வல்லே வேர்வார் போலமு
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 \(-இன்\) \(-i\n\), the other based on the frozen conditional form of the embedding verb \(ஆᾁத᾿\) \(ākutal\), i.e., \(ஆயிᾁ\) \(āyi\n\), “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 \(எᾁ HWND\) \(eṉṉutal\) is already found in the same function, i.e., \(எனிᾁ\) \(e\n\i\n\), “if”.

From the early \(Kīḻkkaṇakku\) 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 \(-இன்\) \(-i\n\), 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 \(-ஆ᾿\) \(-āl\). 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 \(-உά\) \(-um\) to any conditional form a concessive can be formed (“although”), but also absolutive or infinitive plus \(-உά\) \(-um\) can stand either in coordination or for a concessive.

One further form of the embedding verb \(ஆᾁత᾿\) \(ākutal\), the oblique of the verbal noun, under the two forms \(ஆகᾢᾁ\) \(ākali\n\) and \(ஆతᾢᾁ\) \(ātali\n\), 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 \(அநா᾿\) \(ānā\), \(அதனா᾿\) \(atānā\) (“therefore”), \(அதᾱறைல\) \(ataṉṟalai\) (“moreover”, literally “on top of that”) and \(அதெனதிஞ\) \(ataṉetir\) (“in view of that”).
forms of the conditional

verbal root + -இ SDLK -in
(strong verbs + -ppiŋ)
finite verb + ஆயி SDLK āyiŋ (embedding)
finite verb + அகிழ் ākil (embedding)
verbal root + -இ SDLK -il, -எ SDLK -ēl

(strong verbs + பியை/Kை SDLK -ppii/K -kkii, உகை SDLK ukakkii, புப்பை/Kை/கை SDLK -ppē/K -kkēi)
finite verb + -எ SDLK -ēl/-ஆ SDLK -āl

abs. + -ஆ SDLK -āl

forms of the concessive

abs. + -ஞ SDLK -um
inf. + -ஞ SDLK -um
v.r. + -இ SDLK -iun (strong verbs + -ppiun)
f.v. + ஆயி SDLK āyiun (embedding)
f.v. + அகிழ் ākilun (embedding)
f.v. + -எ SDLK -ēlun (embedding)
v.r. + -இ SDLK -ilun (strong verbs + -ppilun)
abs. + -ஆ SDLK -ālum

A few isolated forms such a kantāl in PN 390.25 can be found.
postpositions and conjunctions of reasoning

- ākali/ātalinn  ஆக Aviv/ஆத Aviv causal clause: “because”
- ānāl/ātarnāl  ஆனா/ஆதனா “therefore”
- ataralai  அதனால “moreover”
- atuṇetir  அதெனதி “in view of that”

conditional clauses

- in type impersonal:

KT 102.1  உைளி ஐளம் வேநே
ullin ullam vemē
remember-if inside burn(hab.fut.)
“when remembering, the inside burns.”

- in type unmarked for subject:

KT 280.4f.  ஒன்று பண்டைய பணாயிடி
oru puṇara puṇarin
arai nāl valkkaiyum vențalen yăne
one day unite(inf.) unite-if
half day live= I-need-not I
“If I can be in union [with her] for a single day,
I will not need living for [another] half day.”

- in type marked for subject:

KT 316.2f.  ஆணாறு எளிதியல் எவனையவிளங்கு
anai ariyin | uleņo vāli tōli
mother know-if | be-I live(sub.) friend
“If mother gets to know, will I [still] exist, friend?”
Conditional, Concessive, Causal Clauses

அயியா் அயியா் type:

KT 174.5f. அயியா் அயியா் அயியா் அயியா் அயியா்

porulvayin pirivār āyiṇ i ulakattu
porulē-maṇḍa porulē
wealth-for he-separates(h.) if this- world-
wealth<sup>ē</sup> maṇḍa wealth<sup>ē</sup>

“If he separates for the sake of wealth, in this world
truly only wealth is wealth.”

அயியா் அயியா் type hypothetical:

KT 148.5f. கான் கான் கான் கான்
kāṟ anusu enri āyiṇ
kanavō marru itu vinavuval yānē
rainy-season is-not-so you-say(sub.) if
dream<sup>ā</sup> maṇḍa 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?’”

அயியா் அயியா் type with past tense and hypothetical:

KT 350.2f. நீவும் நீவும்
cellātim-ena
collinam āyiṇ 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  அணிимвைல் யாக ஆக் உல்கின் அலிநே
ani mulai ākam ulkiṉam celinē
adorn- breast bosom we-remembered go-if6
“If we were to go, we would remember [her] bosom
with adorning breasts.”

நின் ayin type as subject clause:

KT 98.1-3  ஆவர் அவ்வூர் விஃ்புர் விளிம்பீஸ்
avar | tuṇṇa ceṇṟu ceppunar perinē
naṇṟu-mañ vāḷi tōḷi
he(h.) | approach(inf.) gone saying-he(h.) obtain-if6
good-itm live(sub.) friend
“If we were to obtain someone who goes to approach
[and] talks to him, that would be good indeed, o friend.”

என் enin type:

NA 334.8f.  மீன்னுவர் விஃ்புராக்கூர் வாதீஸ்வரி
minantu vaci vilakkattu varum enin
en-ō tōḷi nam in uyir nilai-ē
lightning split lamp- coming- say-if
what6 friend our- pleasant life state6
“If he comes with a split of lightning for a lamp,
what, friend, will be the state of our sweet life?”
 Conditional, Concessive, Causal Clauses

ākil type:

Poy 88.4  ஏன் என்னே என்கு
en ākil ennē enakku
what if what[e] me(dat.)
“If anything should happen, what [is it] to me?”

finite verb plus -ēl:

AiAi 9.2  அழியேவடா ஏ தாிதிேயēl
aḻiy evēṭā ēl
be-desolate(inf.) need-not(n.sg.) understand-you(sub)ēl
“If you understood, it wouldn’t be necessary [for you]
to be desolate.”

verbal root plus -il:

Pēy 82.1  உணாிவாியāl
uṇarīl uṇarv ariyan
perceive-if perception difficult-he
“When perceiving, he is difficult to perceive.”

absolutive plus -āl:

Pēy 25.1  துல்லுறு பாுளுடு உண்டே
toltul paṇṭu uṇṭē
worshipped-if mistake it-isē
“If you worship, is it a mistake?”

concessives

absolutive plus -um:

KT 64.4f.  என்றுடன் உண்டே என்றுடன்
enṟū ṭudan uṇṭē enṟū ṭudan uṇṭē

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

infinitive plus -um:

KT 311.2f. வலவா நிலாவிட்டிக் கழித்தெக் கடை காட்டின்று காட்டின்று
charioteer restrain(inf.)
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 -in:

Conditional, Concessive, Causal Clauses

आयிண் āyiṇum:

KT 42.1,4  காம எல்லா தாயிண் ... kāmam olivatu āyiṇum ...
em totarpum tēyumō
desire ceasing-it if-even ...
our- attachmentēm dwindling-ō
“Even if passion is something that ceases,
will our attachment dwindle, too?”

ஆகிற் ākilum:

Poy 55.1f. அவன் தாரம் விநாயகர் அகிலம் எம் |
avan tamar e vinaiyar ākilum em kōn | avan tamarē
de their-people(h.) what- karma if-even our- king | his peopleē
ing his people, whatever [their] karma, are our king’s people.”

-எல்ல -ēlum: Note that -எல்ல—ēl/ēlum may even occur with predicate nouns:

Pēy 81.1f. நெசைல் நிதைப்பு எலுமை எலுமைப்புநிறுந்தை |
nēncāl niṇaipp ttēlēnum nilai perru en
eṇicēmē pēcāy
heart(inst.) thinking difficult-heēlum position obtained my-
heartē speak(ipt.)
“Though he is difficult to think of by the heart, take a stand,
my heart, speak.”
causal clause with ஆக腆் ākaliṅ:

NA 99.9f. பிடவும் கொங்கியும் கொடவு

piṭavum kōnrayum kōṭalum

maṭava ākaliṅ malarntaṇa palavē

large-flowered-jasmine laburnum white-Malabar-lily

ignorant-they(n.pl.) because they-flowered(n.pl.) any(n.pl.)

“large-flowered jasmine, laburnum and white Malabar lily,
because they are foolish they have flowered, many [of
them].”

அதனா் atañāl: “therefore”

NA 67.9f. எமறும் வெட்டம் புக்கனர். அதனா

emarum vēṭṭam pukkaṉar. atañāl

tankin evaṉō teyya

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

stay-if what

“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:

- இ᾿ al, “not to be so” (complementary to இرعاية iru “to be present”)
- இ᾿ il, “not to be” (complementary to உ trebuie ul “to exist”)

Derived from இ᾿ il there is an indeclinable form இ᾿யல ilal, “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 (இ᾿யாயா ceyyātu). Next, the negative verbal root இ᾿ al can be added between the verbal root and the pronominal suffix. The use of இ᾿ 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 இ᾿ 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 இ᾿ 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 ஐ/இ o/ō.

1. இ᾿ைல ilai  “not” up to modern Tamil
2. zero suffix v.r.-pron.suff. அறிந்தோ țiṟiyēn, “I don’t know”
3. negative stem v.r.-ā-pron.suff. வெண்கிதேவ்வு ṝvātu, “it does not stop”
4. -அைl as a suffix v.r.-al-pron.suff. கானாைல kāṉālār, “they don’t see”
5. -இைl as a suffix perf. stem-il-pron.suff. கெண்டலை koṇṭilai, “you do not take” (late)
6. double verb forms positive + negative form ஒளிலல் olvāḷ allal, “she will not agree”

For type 2 in the third person there is a marked preference for forms with -அைl before the ending (அறியாேதா’ aṟiyātōr, அறியாேல aṟiyāl), which might be analysed in two ways, namely either as a verbal root plus pronominal suffix, to which the rarer alternative would be அறியா ceyyā, etc., or, tentatively, as a short negative stem அறியா ceyyā plus just a pronominal ending -ா, 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: அறியாதைல ariyāṭōr, “those who do not know”. The mere negative stem is one of the most ambiguous forms that exist: அறியா ceyyā corresponds to neg. pey. (“who does

32 A variant form with -(இ)க’ -(k)kal instead of -அை(இ) -al(l) is fairly well attested in the Kalittokai: அறிக்கால் arikallāy, “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”).

இ᾿ைல: illai:
KT 25.1  மாறி மித்தையை yārum illai
who\textsuperscript{sm} not “Nobody is there.”

zero suffix:
KT 200.4  மர்தன்வா மார்தி மாரவண்ம நமே
māṛantōṛ maṇra māravāṁ nāmē
got-forget-he(h.)\textsuperscript{māra} forget-not-we we\textsuperscript{ē}
“He has forgotten indeed. We, we won’t forget.”

neg. stem, long (more often neg. part.n.):
KT 6.4  ஒலை வாள் அறை தேதேன
ōr yā rāṇa tuṇcāēnē
one maṇra sleep-not-\textsuperscript{ē}
“I alone, indeed, am one who does not sleep.”

neg. stem, short, for n.sg.:
KT 254.2df.+7  கோங்குயித
kōṅkuṭāyī ṭālaḻa vantaṇa vārā iōṭi …
koṅkuṭī
talai alar vantaṇa vārā iōṭi …
eyṭiνrāl ēṇa varūum tūtē.
Koṅku\textsuperscript{in}
head blossom they-came(n.pl.) not-come-it friend
he-reached(h.)\textsuperscript{ē} say(inf.) coming- messenger\textsuperscript{ē}.
“The first Koṅku 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. ஏன் கண்டின் வாழி தாழி
en kan tuṇcā vāli tōlī
my- eye sleep-not-they(n.pl.) live(sub.) friend
“My eyes don’t sleep, o friend.”

verbal root -அவ -al as a negative suffix:

KT 290.1f. காமம் தான்மயதி என்னைஞ்சாவ் தமிழ்
kāmam tāṅkumati eṉpūr tām akt
ariyalar-kollō anai matukaiyar-kol
desire bear(ipt.) say-they(h.) they(pl.) that
know-not-they(h.)kollō such strength-they(h.)kol
“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 -இவ -il, first on a verbal root, then on a perfective stem as is fairly normal from bhakti times onwards:

KT 113.3f. ஆரை தேர் வெள் குருகு ஆல்லா யாவது
irai tēr vel kuruk, allatu yāvatum
prey search- white egret except anything
approaching go-not-itāl groveā
“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 ஆய்வணிலார்
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 ஒன்றையிருகின்றேன் நான்கொண்டேன் விடேம்
onrum arikin tilen annaimir ennakk, uyv, itame
oneum know-not-I mother(2.pl.) me(dat.) escaping
place
“I don’t know of any place, mothers – for me to escape to.”

Special Constructions with -இல -il

negation of action (expressed verbal noun):

KT 168.6 manattalum tanattalum ilame
unitingum departingum not-we
“We can neither unite nor depart.”
(lit. “we are without uniting or departing”)

negation of quality:

NA 143.6 valu ilal-amma tanē
corrupt not-sheamma self
“she, alas, is without fault.”

negation of fact:

NA 193.5 tīt-arintanē ilame
evil-it it-knew not-we
“We did not know of any evil.”
(lit. “we were without knowing...”)

Negation
nominalisation:

KT 93.4  
пулві овнο ілам-катаиве
pulavi aktu evanō anv, ilam-katayē
sulking that what⁷ love not-we(loc.)⁶
“What is that, sulking – in us who are without love?”

KT 115.6  
нал маляі ниа ніят алу ілэ
nal malai nāṭa nīalatu ilāṭē
good mountain land-he(voc.) you- not-so-it not-she⁸
“Man from a land of good mountains, without you she does not exist.”

Probably an isolated case is an impersonal construction with ілэ
ilam instead of ілам illai:

TV 31.1  
tuṭ, enru icaitṭal icai ilam
messenger said speak-if speak-absence
“If [I] speak ‘speak as [my] messenger!’ there is no speaking.”

Double verb forms with -அல -al

negation of quality with a pronominalised noun:

KT 47.4  
наллай адулай ней вел нилаве
nallai allai netu vel nilavē
good-you not-so-you long white moonlight⁸
“You are no good, long white moonlight.”

past tense negation:

AN 98.6  
неинтанал адулай аннай
arintanāl allal annai
she-knew not-so-she mother  “Mother did not know.”
Negation

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

NA 376.11f. 

*varum puṇam kāval viṭāmai *

*arintāñir allirō arān il yāyē *

poor field guarding letting-not

you-knew(pl.) not-so-you(pl.) duty- not- mother
g “Haven’t you understood that [our] virtueless mother won’t let [us] guard the empty field?”

-al with a subjunctive:

KT 224.6  

*tuyar poṅkku, allēn *

misery I-bear(sub.) I-not-so  “I cannot bear the misery.”

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

KT 52.5  

*parintanēṇ allaṇō *

I-sympathized not-so-I/ho-so-he
g “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  

*kēlēṃ allēm. kēṭṭañam peruma *

hear-not-we not-so-we we-heard great-one(voc.)  

g “It is not that we did not hear. We heard, great one.”

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 (*இᾞத᾿ iru tal/உ῀-த᾿ uḷ-tal/ஆᾁత᾿ ākutal*) and with some exceptional constructions, for example with *அவ/animate cel-tal*, later also *அனstants 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  கவைலｧனெதఆபவவெசாறவாறேற
kavalaitu eña avar cenṟa āṟē
crossroad-it they-say he(h.)-gone- wayē
“It has crossroads, they say, the way he has gone.”

insertion of optative:

KT 19.3  இனாயனிடாயியாய்நேங்சே
inānati vāliya neṅē
despair(ipt.) may-live heartē
“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.  

\begin{verbatim}
पञ्चकालि निन्नैि
pal kālum niṁnai
\end{verbatim}

many timeum you(acc.) way live-they(h.) live-they(h.) becoming-itmātō
day many time you(acc.) way live-they(h.) live-they(h.) becoming-itmātō

“Is it not\(^{33}\) that those who walk (lit. live) you as the path for a long time, shall live?”

NA 128.3  

\begin{verbatim}
एनक्कु निइरायीि आयि
eṇakku nī uraiyāy āyinai
\end{verbatim}

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 एस्/वरु cel/varu seems to express an exhortation:

KT 198.5  

\begin{verbatim}
पटु किलि कातिकम चेरुम
patu kili kaṭikam cērum
\end{verbatim}

goose happen- parakeet we-chase we-go

“Let us go and chase parakeets that come down [into the millet].”

\(^{33}\)Here the negation is an attempt at rendering the flavour of the particle - मातो -mātō, politely suggesting that something is the case.
murreccam with aspectual impact:

KT 275.2  
\emph{kantanam varukam cenmõ tõli}  
we-saw we-come go! friend 
“Up! Let us come [back] after we have seen, friend.”

AN 398.20f.  
\emph{pal pũm kānatt, alki inr, ivan}  
cērntaï alki ōtō 
many flower forest- abided today here 
you-joined go-if\textsuperscript{6} being-wasted-it it-is\textsuperscript{5} 
“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  
\emph{virunṭin mūrāl arumpiṇa nilp} 
feast\textsuperscript{7} smile budded-she stand\textsuperscript{inf.}  
“while she stood, as one who broke out in a smile like a 
feast”

murreccam for rhetorical effect:

NA 373.3f.  
\emph{mai paṭu māl varai pāṭinaḷ koṭicci}  
aivāṇam veḷ nel kurūṭum nāṭaṇ  
kohl happen- big mountain she-sang creeper-she 
wild-rice white paddy pounding- land-he
Double Verb Forms

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“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 mēl, “upon”; kil, “beneath”; mut, “before”; pin, “after”; utan, “along with”; ul, “inside”; etir, “opposite”; veli, “outside”. The most frequent nouns are basic words for body parts such as talai, “head”, kai, “hand”, puram, “back”, but see the following (incomplete) list of examples:

etir-kol 2. “to receive”  
veli-p-patu 6. “to come out”  
ārri-p-patu 11. “to bring on the way”  
kan-patu 6. “to close one’s eyes”  
talai-p-piri 4. “to separate”  
puram-tā 13. “to protect; to defy”  
va(p)-patu 6. “to follow, to worship”

A small group of verbs, in the early time most frequently urutal, “to experience”, may function as a verbalisers by incorporating a noun, occasionally lexicalised: inp-urutal, “to feel pleasure”; kām-urutal, “to desire” (contracted and lexicalised from kāmam urutal); alam-
varutal and அலம்‌த᾿ 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 மாவிைன வாᾸᾐ māviṅai vāy-ḍiṣṭu
         horse(acc.) mouth ripped    “mouth-ripping the horse”
         ~ “ripping the mouth of the horse”

Compounds of two verbs also exist, such as பொந்‌த᾿ pōtarutal, “to come”; மேவ‌த᾿ mēvarutal, “to be fitted for” (contracted from மேவ‌-வ‌த᾿ 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:

அய᾿‌த᾿ aytal 4. “to be engaged in”
அ(கு)த᾿ a(kutal) 13. “to be possible” (bhakti)
அர்‌த᾿ arrutal 5. “to bear”
இயட?action icaital 4. “to be possible”
இய_ட ail-tal 3. “to befall”
இயட?action iyaital 4. “to be agreeable”
இவாட?action uvattal 12. “to rejoice”
ோோ்க்‌த᾿ eytal 11. “to grow weary”
ோோ்கோ்த᾿ ollutal 5. “to be possible”
Double Verb Forms

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<td>5. “to stop”</td>
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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 absolutive, but we also find the verbal noun in -ṭāl.

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

- v.r. + கிற் kil-tal “to be able to”
- v.r. + வாய்ந் varutal starting an action
- abs. + உண்மய் uraital remaining in a stable state
- abs. + அமைய் amaital reaching a new stability
- [abs. + ஈத் ītal benefactive: already frozen into imperatives]

Auxiliaries that start in or continue into later Old Tamil:

- v.r. + தர் tarutal an action outside the control of the speaker or moving towards the speaker (since Caṅkam, prevailing, though ignored by the tradition)
- டயா இருக்கு ceyyā abs.
- + பூர் nil-tal continuous form34

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34 Both முதல் olukul, “to flow” and இரு இரு irutal, “to be”, have to be regarded as less successful predecessors of nil-tal for the continuous form; both
abs. + அனைத்து arulutal general benefactive (bhakti)
abs. + சீண்டு iñutal completion of an action (Kīkkaṇakku)
abs. + விது vitutal completion of an action (late Caṅkam)
abs. + பொருகு pokutal concluding an action with negative outcome
v.n. + உடு urutal beginning or undertaking of an action

Auxiliaries that appear to be fairly stable:

inf. + பாத் paṭutal passive (stray occurrences already in Caṅkam)
abs. + குளத்தல் kol-tal middle voice (stray occurrences already in Caṅkam)

நிறம் kil-tal, “to be able to”:

KT 22.1f. பிந்து விழுப்பிறும் | மாணவ மிகின்சு பாணத்திற்கு
nī ivan oliya | yārō piri-kirpavare
you here stay-behind(inf.) | who(h.)⁶ separate- able-he(h.)⁶

“Who will be able to separate while you stay behind?”

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

NA 298.5 அரும் கவலை அின்வு வந்த வாலை
arum curam kavalai añcu varum naṇam talai
difficult desert crossroad fear- coming- wide place

“the vast area where the crossroads in the difficult desert become frightening”

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

³⁵In the bhakti period, infinitive plus உடு urutal can rarely be found as a passive construction instead of infinitive + பாத் paṭutal.
உைறத᾿ *uraital* for remaining in a stable state:

KT 65.4 வாரா உைறாறந் வாறால்

vārāt, uraiyunar varal nacaii

come-not staying-he(h.) coming longed-for

“longing for the coming of him who stays away”

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

KT 137.2-4 நிைறசிவாைமாைெவாைவி

niṟ turant, amaikuven āyin en turantu

iravalar 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.”

தᾞத᾿ *tarutal* for an action outside of the control of the speaker:

KT 95.1 மாீவைனிழித் தைல்

māl varai iil-tarum tū vel aruvi

big mountain fall-giving- purity white waterfall

“the pure white waterfall that tumbles from the tall mountain”
continuous form with சய்வர்மியச் சய்வர்மிய ceyya + nil-tal:

Poy 43.1+4 மங்கக்கா சய்வர்மியச் சய்வர்மிய எற்ற என்ற மேனமா நி தீ மேனமாவி கையே மனமா நி தீ மாம்ம பெி தீரம் ஆள்வு தீரம் ஆள்வு சாரா... 
              தா தாழா நி தம் தம் மானமா நி தீ மாம்ம பெி தீரம் ஆள்வு தீரம் ஆள்வு சாரா... 
              tām tōlā-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 இஞ்சிய இஞ்சிய ஓக்கே இஞ்சிய tēṭu-ṇinṟa iralai ēre
               sought stood-Iralai stag   “the Iralai stag that kept seeking”]

இன்றுநீர் arulutal as a benefactive:

Tē 7.70.4.4 மங்கக்கா சய்வர்மியச் சய்வர்மிய enai aṅcal enṛ-aruḷāy
               me(acc.) don’t-fear said grace(ipt.)

“Graciously tell me “do not be afraid!”

இன்று itutal for the completion of an action:

TVM 6.2.7.1f. யையாய்யரு யையாய்யரு ்கள் கல் காதல் hālam unt-iṭṭa niṅmalā
              sea world eaten-placed | spotless-one(m.voc.)

“o spotless one who has eaten up the ocean[-girded] world”
vīṭutal for the completion of an action.\footnote{Clear examples for \textit{vīṭutal} 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 \textit{vīṭiyal virittu-viṭṭam}, “as if dusk had spread”).}

Kali 94.44f. 

\[ \text{tukaḷ tērpu kāci avaiyattār ĩlai} \]
\[ \text{mukaṭu kāppu yāṭṭu-viṭṭānku} \]

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”

pōkutal for the completion of an action with negative outcome:

Pēy 74.1f. 

\[ \text{nańcē ūṭṭu val pēy} \]

poison fed strong demoness

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

paṭutal for the passive:

KT 288.5 

\[ \text{inīṭē ēṇa-p-pāṭṭum puttēḷ nāṭē} \]

pleasant-it say(inf.) it-happens god land\footnote{\textit{vīṭutal} is used as the auxiliary to \textit{vīṭul}, meaning “to complete an action.”

According to the grammar, the \textit{vīṭul} particle is used to indicate the completion of an action, and when it is used with an auxiliary like \textit{vīṭutal}, it signifies the completion of an action with a specific context or outcome. For example, in the passage provided, Kali 94.44f. illustrates the use of \textit{vīṭutal} for the completion of an action, followed by a description of its outcome—"like a palm-leaf of the insight[ful scholars] of the assembly, firmly tied with the top protection after the dust is wiped off."}

“The land of the gods is called pleasant.”
[passive with உᾠத᾿ uratal instead of பᾌத᾿ paṭutal:]

Cilap 12.13.1 சீᾡெராᾞமகனானிைரெகா῀ள
   cīṟu uru makanān nirai kolla-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”]

எகா῀-த᾿ kol-tal for middle voice:

Poy 36.4 ெகமாறிகுறி இராயல் மேல்
   man irantu-konta vakai
   earth begged-taken manner
   “the way that he (Vāmana) took the earth for himself”

TVM 9.4.8.4 கண்ணரைக் காண்வைக்குறி கண்வெகாᾶ
   Kaṇṇanai kaṇṭu-konṭēnē
   Kaṇṇan(acc.) seen-taken-f
   “I have for myself seen Kaṇṇan.”

எகா῀ uratal for the beginning or undertaking of an action:

Tē 4.34.6 நீ῀வைறாᾹக᾿ உஇறாᾹகாடனா῾ நில் varai etukkal urṟān
   tōl muṭi neriya vaittār tol maraikkāṭanār
   “the one from ancient Maṟaikkāṭu (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 Aṅkurunāru constructions may be found that would not be possible in the Kuruntokai, and by the time of the Kural 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 -ṣṭ -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 -ṣṭ -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 -ṣṭ -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 -ṣṭ -ē).
The basic distribution patterns account for “normal” word order and various types of focalisation:

normal word order: \[ S \ O \ P(= f.v./pr.n.)-\text{ē} \]
postposition of subject: \[ O \ P \ S-\text{ē} \]
postposition of object: \[ S \ P \ O-\text{ē} \]
postposition of adverb: \[ S \ O \ P \text{ adv.}-\text{ē} \]

focalisation:
\begin{itemize}
  \item focalisation of subject: \[ S-\text{ē} \ O \ P(-\text{ē}) \]
  \item anteposition of object: \[ [O-\text{ē} \ P \ S] \text{ rare} \]
  \item anteposition of adverb: \[ [\text{adv.-ē} \ O \ P \ S] \text{ rare} \]
  \item anteposition of predicate (closed): \[ [O] \ P-\text{ē} \ S-\text{ē} \]
  \item anteposition of predicate (open-ended): \[ [O] \ P-\text{ē} \ S \]
\end{itemize}

address:
\[ N-\text{ē} \]

S O P-\text{ē} verbal sentence:

KT 13.3f.
\[ nāṭaṉ \ | \ nōy \ tantānē \ tōlī \]
land-he | pain he-gave\text{ē} friend
“The man from the land gave pain, friend.”

S O P-\text{ē} nominal sentence:

KT 35.5
\[ vāṭaiyum \ pirinticinörkk_{,} \ aḷalē \]
north wind\textsuperscript{am} separated-they(dat.) fire\textsuperscript{ē}
“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.
\[ tumpi \ | \ kāmam \ ceppātu \ kaṇṭatu \ moḻimō \]
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  

yām akt_u 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.

malai keḻu nāṭaṅ kēnmai

talaipōkāmai nark_u aṟintanėy yānē

mountain have- land-he intimacy

not-having-come-to-an-end well I-knew I

“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

pulamp_u aṟintanėy avar maṇanta tōlē

loneliness it-adorned he(h.) united- shoulder

“Loneliness has come to adorn the shoulder he united with.”

S O P adv.-ē adverb postposition:

KT 14.6

yām nāṇukam cēritē
we be-ashamed(1.pl.sub.) small-it€
“We may be ashamed, a little.”

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

KT 24.5f. ... ḍelāṇṭam̐ru ṣarānum
kāṭalak ṛavaṃ kāṭalak ṛavaṃ
... koṭiyōr nāvē
kāṭalak akalak kalen’ravē
cruel-they tongue€
lover(h.) depart(inf.) ‘kal’-said(n.pl.)€
“The tongues of the cruel ones,
they foretold that the lover would depart.”

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

KT 73.1  makiḻṉār maṟṉē vēyiyāḷ nī
makilŋu marpē veyyaiyāl nī
delight-he chest€ hot-you€ you
“On the delightful man’s chest you are keen indeed.”

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

KT 140.3  kuraṇē cēṛuṇār kāṭalak
curaṇē cēṛuṇar kāṭalar
desert€ he-went(h.) lover(h.)
“To the desert the lover has gone.”

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

KT 112.4f.  arṟe | kanticin tōḷi avara unṭa en nalaṇē
thus-it€ | see(ipt.) friend he(h.) eaten- my- innocence€
“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. ஊ᾽ᾰᾁ மணிᾐெபாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپாᾃெپா>true

“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 தாெகாᾌ பறைவ ...

aliva tāmē koṭum cirai paravai ...
irai koṇṭamaiyin viraiyumāl celavē
pity-they(n.pl.) self(pl.) curved wing bird ...
food having-taken they-hurry(n.p.) going
“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 பலங்கி மடியட பலங்கி மடியட

petal were there many times 1st sing. they
petal were there many times 1st sing. they
akaval makaḷē akaval makaḷē
maṇavu kōppu, anṇa nal neṭum kūntal
akaval makaḷē

Akaval woman⁶ Akaval woman⁶
chank-bead string like good long tresses
Akaval woman⁶

“Aoothsaying woman, soothsaying woman,
with good long tresses [white] as strings of chank bead,
soothsaying woman!”

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

KT 52.2

fearful-spirit longed-for-thus-you become(abs.)
trembling seen⁶

“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 -ē. The interrogative particles -ஏகா᾿ kol, -ஓ -ō and ஏகா᾿ேலா 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. Some of the more important particles that seem fairly comprehensible are:

- மᾹ maṉ - assertive with shades of evaluation; irrealis
- மᾹற maṉṟa - assertive with shades of evaluation
- ஆ் al - assertive with shades of evaluation
- அᾞΆ amma - lament; inviting attention
- திா tilla - wish
- தை் teyya - admonition
- மᾹேதா mātō - particle of emphatically doubtful (rhetorical) question
- மிா mṟṟu - adversative/contrastive? (also change of subject, topic/perspective)

Among the unexplained particles remain the following: அெகா᾿ attai, -அெகா scriil, -அெகா scriil -ārum, அகா் kon-, யாழ 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

37 For ஏகா᾿ kol as an interrogative and மᾹ maṉ and மᾹற maṉṟa 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, Itaiiyal, 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” (அைச 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 மாற்று marru, which may appear between sentences, and the particle கொண்டு kon, which appears to be proclitic and entered into the dictionaries like a noun with the four functions identified by the Tolkāppiyam (TC 249i: அஞ்சு accam, “fear”, பயநிய payamili “uselessness”, காலம் kālam, “time”, பருமா perumai, “greatness”).

Syntactical patterns:

-மாற்று -marru (certainty): S PrN/(f.v.)-marru
postpositions marked by -எ -ē; combinations: மாற்றுமாற்று marrilla,
மாற்றுமாற்று marrō, மாற்றுமாற்று marrē

மாற்று marru (certainty): PrN/(f.v.) marru S-ē
P marru
combinations: மாற்றுமாற்று marramma

-அல் -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: -ஆலΆம -āl-amma, -ஆிறி᾿ல -āilla

ஆலΆмма (“alas”): P amma S-ē(.)
focalisation in combination: P ɱarr’amma S-ē
P-āl amma S
call for attention: அΆமம் வாழி ேதாழி amma vāḷi tōli (?)

ஐம் tilla (wish): P(opt./sub.) tilla
(“would that...!” – desire)
P(opt./sub.) tillamma (“if only...!” – irrealis)

ஐம் teyya (admonition): S O P-ē/-ō teyya (“please”)

இ்க்க்க் māṭō: S O P-māṭō (“is it not that...?”)

ஐ்க்க்ப்ப்ர் marra: S-marra
marra-S
(not restricted to the main sentence; also in a period; position more fluid)

combinations (always on the predicate): உ்த்து marre, உ்த்து ōmarre, உ்த்து marilla

Examples:

assertive உ்த் man:

KT 153.3 ஆங்கணம் காற்றிக்குடம் தோற்ற பைடிக்கு
aŋcum-man alittē en neĩcam iṇiyē
fearing-it_mar pity-it my-heart now[^]

“Fearful indeed, pitiful is my heart now.”

உ்த் man in combination with உ்த் marra for an irrealis:

KT 98.1-3 அங்க்கு | காற்றிக்குத் தோற்ற பைடிக்கு marra
Modal Particles

avar | tuṇṇa ceṟru ceppunar perinē
nāṇru-man vāli tōli
he(h.) | approach(inf.) gone saying-he(h.) obtain-if
good-itman live(sub.) friend

“If we were to obtain someone who goes to approach [and] talk to him, that would be good indeed, o friend.”

emmannē:

KT 191.6f. 
ōtiyum puṇaiyal

emnum totāal enkuvem manṇē
hairsum don’t-adorn
ussum don’t-touch we-saymanṇē

“Don’t adorn [our] hair
and don’t touch us, we shall indeed say.”

emmannō:

KT 229.4 ētān il ciru ceru urupa manṇō
reason-not little quarrel they-have

“For sure they have a little quarrel without reason?”

assertive manṇa:

KT 35.1 nāṇ-ilā manṇa em kaṇṇē
shame not-they(n.pl.)manṇa our- eye

“Our eyes indeed, they are without shame.”
assertive -āl:

KT 120.2  

aritu vēṭtaṉaiyāl neńcē  

difficult-it wanted-you heart  

“Indeed you wanted something difficult, heart.”

lamentative amma:

KT 45.5  

teruvat, amma i inai pirattalē  

scorch-it this- family being-born  

“A torment it is, ah, to be born into this family.”

tillamma for an irreal wish:

KT 56.4  

varuka tillamma tāńē  

“Would that she came, she herself.”

tilla for a wish:

KT 57.4  

uṭaṇ uyir pōkuka tilla  

“May we go from this life together.”

teyya for (gentle) admonition:

NA 215.8f.  

iṇṭaṇ ni ivanaai aki emmoṭu  

stay-if what  

“Since you are here today, what if you stayed with us, please?”
Modal Particles

mbtō as a question suggesting that something is the case:

KT 253.4

nāḷ tuyar keṭa piṁ nūcalar mbtō
day misery be-lost(inf.) after delay-not-he(h.)mbtō

“Surely he will not delay further, so that [your] days are
lost in misery?” ~ “Will he delay further...?”

adversative mbtō marru:

KT 299.1

itu marru evaṁo tōli
“This again, what is it, friend?”

mbtō marru as a mark of subject change, frequently used in narrative Tamil:

Kural 1155

ōmpiṁ amaintār pirivā ōmpal marru avar
nūkin aritāl puṇarvū

“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 -ō is one of the most complex. There is an old layer
(shared by Akam and Puṟam) where -ō is a tonal particle of lament
or mourning. This concerns metrical patterns within the old stock of
Akam and Puṟam formulae: ompuṟṟaṁ nōkō yāṅē, “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 -ē -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 இறீஇயேரா iṟīiyarō, “let them break”. Moreover, -ē -ō is frequently used for a demarcation of topic, also plausibly to be developed out of the interrogative function.

KT 221.1 அவேராவா᾽ avarō vārār
he(h.)ō come-not-he(h.) “He? He did not come.”
~ “As for him, he did not come.”

KT 21.4f. காெரன ᾃッシ medsūn
மெனம் ஞீற்றி மெபாᾼவழᾱ kār eṇak kūṟiṁum
yāṅo tēṟēṅ avar poy valañkalarē
drainy-season say talking-if-even
Iō believe-not-I he(h.) lie use-not-he(h.)ō
“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 ḫнные pūṭṭuvil (“the drawn bow”), first attested in Nakkīran’s commentary on Iraiyanār Akapporuḷ 56 (under the name of ḫнные viṭṭuvil), then obtaining its own sūtra in Naṉṕil 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 -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  உன்னை டிர்ரியா டுண்டிரி ...  
               அேந்நா அரிணாளிய குருப் பொருள்  
               ullār kollō tōli ...  
               am kāl kalliyān kāṭu, iṟantōrē∞  
               remember-not-he(h.)kollā friend ...  
               pretty leg spurge- wilderness traversed-he(h.)ē
“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 இᾐமிஇெறவேனாேதாழி ...  
itu marr evanō tōli ...  
peru mutu peṇṭirēm ākiya namakkē  
thismarr whatō friend ...  
big old women-we become(p.)- us(dat.)ē  
“This, what is it, friend, ...  
for us who have become great old women?”

adverbial phrase of location:

KT 85.1,6 யாாிணமியனியᾹேபரᾹபினேன ...  
yāρinum iniyān pēr aŋpiṇanē ...  
yāṇar ľurān pāṇan vāyē  
whoinum pleasant-he big love-heē ...  
fertility village-he bard mouthē  
“Sweeter than all [and] great in loving is he ...  
in the mouth of the bard, the man from the fertile village.”

nonfinite postpositions

absolutive:

KT 66.1,5 மடவ மன்றமாடுவேறுக்குழுந்துகைந்து ...  
maṭava maŋra taṭavu nilai koŋrai ...
"Foolish indeed are the broad-standing laburnum trees, having taken the unseasonal shower for the rainy season."

infinitive:

KT 157.1,4

“Kukkū crowed the rooster to say dawn has come like a sword.”

conditional:

KT 245.2,6

“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:

\[\text{ெசாகள் சட்டையன் கவளையுள் இரும்புத்} \]

\[\text{ெசாக்கை அப்பிய �＇ேஞ்சான்》} \]
“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 Āciriyappā metre, stanzas in Venpā 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.  அன்பவளிக ஓலராதை ஓலநிலைகளை ஓலந்திக

முன்னிர வரிக்கோம் ஓலன்களை ஓலராதை – மன்னிரத்க

தீர்த்த ஓலை ஓலிடவும் ஓலராதை

மாவிர்த்த ஓலராதை ஓலரந்து

ati mûnri ilakam aru_aralantay pûlum
ati mûnru iranti_avani koñtay – pați niṭra
nîr otam mênî nețu mâlê niṭî aṭiyai
yâr oṭa vallâr aîrîntu
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 Mālē 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 Cankam 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 சிறுவென்காக்கை ciṟu-veṇ kākkai, “small white crow”
KT 103.3 இரைத் நாரை irai-tēr nārai, “prey-searching heron”
KT 163.3 மின்-ஆர் kurzin, “fish-eating heron(obl.)”
KT 16.5 அங்கார் களியண் காடு an-kār kālliyan kāṭu, “pretty-trunked spurge forest”
KT 67.5 நிலார் களியண் kālliyan kāṭu, “spurge forest with parched ground”
KT 216.2  வாடா விலியா காட் vāṭā valliyā kāṭu,
“unfading Vaḷḷi forest”

(KT 124.2 எம்பீண் புருந்த்து எம்பீண் empiyam perunkāṭu,
“a big forest of toothbrush-trees”)

KT 15.5  இனியும் இனியும் இனியும் cēy-ilai vel-vēl vitalaiyōtu
“warrior(soc.) with a red-tipped white spear”

KT 378.4  குடாவட வாய் குடாவட குடாவட cūṭar-vāy neṭu-vēl kāḷaiyōtu
“young man(soc.) with a fire-tipped long spear”

A case in point are also the designations for the hero belonging to a
particular tīṇai, such as தண்ணைய தொருயையான் tannan turaivan, “the
man from the cool ghat”, மெல்லாம் புலம்பான் mellam pulampan, “the
soft giver of loneliness”, நல்லையான nāḷ-lailai nāṭaṇ, “the man
from a land of good mountains. These formulae then may again fall
into subsystems (பெருவரையான peruvārai nāṭaṇ, “the man from
the land of big mountain”), குற்றான kūṟra nāṭaṇ, “the man from
a land of hills). Formulaic analysis also reveals how close the
relation is between Akam and Pūram; 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>person/text</th>
<th>PN</th>
<th>KT</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>AN</th>
<th>AiN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>அளியானிய்</td>
<td></td>
<td>30.6, 293.8</td>
<td>152.9, 289.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>460.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aliyan yēnē</td>
<td></td>
<td>228.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(14.12)</td>
<td>383.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aliyaṁ nyē</td>
<td></td>
<td>257.5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aliyan tānē</td>
<td>143.7, 254.11, 293.6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(324.1), 352.12</td>
<td>(73.7), (118.4), 146.8, 153.4, (224.18), 287.3, 339.11, 373.19, 381.18</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aliyal tānē</td>
<td>5.8, 109.1, 111.1, 243.11</td>
<td>149.1, 212.4, 276.8, 395.7</td>
<td>101.6, 114.5</td>
<td>239.1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aliyaṁ yāmē</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>368.10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aliyar tāmē</td>
<td>51.8, 52.8, 81.3, 237.8, 345.12</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>43.13, (78.12)</td>
<td>381.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aliya tāmē</td>
<td>248.1</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td>163.7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>284.1, 455.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 (அம்மா வாழி தோளில் amma vāli tōli) and the poem end (நோக்காயந் tō tōli), as described in Wilden 2006: 235ff.

A typical and very productive formula to end a poem is:

- கடு “wilderness”
- குரவ “waste land”
- கோறேறா “he who traversed”
- மலை “mountains”
- குரு “hills”

This formulaic end appears to be complementary to the following poem beginnings or main sentences:

- உற்றாக் “won’t he remember, friend?”
- சந்தாக் “where is he, friend?”
- கோறேலா “he doesn’t hear, friend”
- வாரதா “he hasn’t come, o friend”
- கோறேலா “cruel [is] he, o friend”

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38 KT 16.5, 67.5, 216.2; NA 14.11, 189.10; AN 1.19, 25.22, 133.18, 151.15, 395.15.
39 KT 211.7, 215.7, 260.8, 314.6; NA 92.9, 274.9; AN 141.29, 171.15, 201.18.
40 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.
41 AN 18.10.
44 KT 253.1.
45 KT 177.5, 215.3, 260.4.
46 KT 314.4.
47 KT 278.4.
“we have left behind x, o friend”\textsuperscript{48}

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 நடன nāțan, giving rise to the expectation of the same type of sub-clause.

\textsuperscript{48}KT 211.3.
20. Metres: Āciriyappā and Veṇpā – Theoretical and Practical Rules

Metre is a very complex topic, and here only a most basic introduction can be given. The primary sources for the traditional descriptions of metre are the Tolkāppiyam Ceyyuḷiyal, 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 Āciriyappā, occasionally contrasted with Vaṅcippā. Vaṅcippā never appears independently all on its own, Āciriyappā 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 Ceyyuḷiyal also accounts for Veṇpā, as well as for Kalippā and Paripāṭal, the metres for the two latecomers in the Eṭṭuttokai. Veṇpā is the main metre of the Kīḷkkanakku, 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:

- எலுட்டு (eluttu) graphic unit that in Tamil may be either a vowel, a consonant or a consonant with a vowel
- ஐச (acai) smallest metrical unit which can have up to three syllables
- சிர (cīr) metrical foot made of acai
- ஏதி (ati) line made of cīr

For further reading consult the introductions of Niklas 1988 and Zvelebil 1989, for details on classical Āciriyappā 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,  AudioSource:28 `nēr` and  AudioSource:28 `nērpu` along with  AudioSource:28 `nirai` and  AudioSource:28 `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  AudioSource:28 `acai`-units:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nēr</th>
<th>(C)Ṽ Cinema:50</th>
<th>nērpu</th>
<th>(C)Ṽ-Cu Cinema:50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(C)ṼC</td>
<td></td>
<td>(C)ṼC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C)Ṽ</td>
<td></td>
<td>(C)Ṽ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C)ṼC</td>
<td></td>
<td>(C)ṼC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nirai</th>
<th>(C)Ṽ-CV Cinema:50</th>
<th>niraipu</th>
<th>(C)Ṽ-CV-Cu Cinema:50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(C)Ṽ-CV</td>
<td></td>
<td>(C)Ṽ-CV-Cu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C)Ṽ-CVC</td>
<td></td>
<td>(C)Ṽ-CVC-Cu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C)Ṽ-CV</td>
<td></td>
<td>(C)Ṽ-CVC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C)Ṽ-CVC</td>
<td></td>
<td>(C)Ṽ-CVC-Cu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are two possible “anomalies”, namely  AudioSource:28 `alapeṭai`, that is, a metrical lengthening to three morae (spelled by adding a short vowel to a long vowel:  AudioSource:28 `cēey`). 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  AudioSource:28 `cīr`. It is also possible to have a hypermetrical foot or a  AudioSource:28 `kū` literally a “hunch”.

50 A rare special case is a metrical foot that is complemented by a  AudioSource:28 `nēr` consisting of a consonant cluster: NA 98.2  AudioSource:28 `ceyy-mm`, which has to be analysed as  AudioSource:28 `ceyy-mm = nēr-nēr`. 
The possible combination of *acai*-units in a metrical foot (*cīr*) in Āciriyappā:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>nēr</th>
<th>nirai</th>
<th>nērpu</th>
<th>niraipu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nēr</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nirai</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nērpu</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>niraipu</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Āciriyappā allows two *acai* per *cīr* in any combination of *nirai*, *nēr*, *niraipu*, *nērpu* – 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 *nērpu* are irregular; in fact they do occur, but rarely. Lines have four *cīr*, the penultimate only three *cīr*, with the exception of Nūrpā, the adaptation of Āciriyappā for theoretical texts. The number of lines is almost unrestricted, ranging from three-line poems in the *Aiṅkūṟunūṟu* up to 782 in the *Maturaikkāṇci*, although an anthology may fix the number of possible lines (4-8 for the *Kūṟuntokai*). A poem ends in the particle -ē (rarely in -ō or -āy).

**Practical Rules for Āciriyappā:**

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: வாறுவர் வாறு varuvar-kol (KT 177.5) = nirai-nēr-nēr, விடுண்டாயாய் viṭunāl-mania (NA 68.7) nirai-nēr-nēr.

   b) noun + case ending: வாறூர் varu-viruntin (NA 53.8) = nirai-nirai-nēr.

   c) inserted pronoun: வாறூர் varu (y)iruttayr’ avar (NA 68.10) = nirai-nēr-nirai.

   [d) problematic cīr: வாறூர் varu (y)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: டைகன் கையா கையா kā’ iṟantōrē (KT 16.4) = nēr-nirai nēr-nēr; தையா கையா கையா avar āṟralarē (KT 305.4) = nirai-nēr nirai-nēr.

   b) metrical doubling of consonants: யைக்கநா முகை mukai nārumē (KT 193.6).
5) Similarly a number of hypo-metrical feet can be accepted, especially with viṇaiyeccam-s (ceytu/cepyu type = absolutive) that make up a cīr: ceṇṭu, vantu... (i.e. analyse not as nēṟpu, but as nēr-nēr). This does not exclude, however, having cīr like vīṟruvīṟruk (PN 35.22) that count as nēṟpu-nēṟpu. Somewhat less frequent is the nirai/nirai pu variation: taṇintu (KT 195.1) = nirai-nēr against puṟantuṟntu (KT 214.1) = nirai-nirai pu.

[For nirai pu/nērpu nouns similar allowances can be made, but they are rare. Verbal roots in nirai pu/nērpu 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 Veṇpā:

Veṇpā 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. Veṇpā 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. Veṇpā stands on the border between the old and the new type of metrical calculation. Within the verse it no longer counts நிர'ai pu and என்'ai but the short third foot in the final line allows them, under the designations of பிறᾺ Huffman: pīṟappu and காᾺ kācu. The short foot at the end has syntactic consequences: a Veṇpā does not follow the “normal” postposition rules and frequently ends in an absolutive even outside a pūṭuviḻil. The number of lines may vary, but the standard Veṇpā stanza has four lines; the Kural with only two lines is counted as a “dwarf Veṇpā”.

An earlier poetic figure occasionally encountered becomes regular and obligatory from Veṇpā 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 (Nēricaivenpā) or 1a+2a+3a+4a (Inīcaivenpā). In a Nēricaivenpā the rhyme word in line 2d is counted as a taniccol, 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. ṇūṁcīrīlā pāṅkā-ōti – ṇūṁcīrīlā paim-k-ōta, with -k- inserted for the rhyme. Note that also the word order can be affected: Poy 100.1 ṇūṁcīrūrā ṇūṁcīrūrā ṇūṁcīrūrā ṇūṁcīrūrā oṁ atīyum cātu utaṭṭa, “one foot that kicked the cart”, with a peyareccam following its head noun because of etukai with line 2 ṇūṁcīrūrā ṇūṁcīrūrā.

The second possible and frequent but not obligatory feature is mōnai, alliteration within a line.

From bhakti times onwards metrical feet form rhythmical patterns based on combinations of ṇūṁ made from mostly two or three acai, traditionally using standard examples as autonyms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ṇūṁ with two acai</th>
<th>tēmā</th>
<th>nēr-nēr</th>
<th>nēr-nēr-nēr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pulimā</td>
<td>nirai-nēr</td>
<td>nirai-nirai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kāvilam</td>
<td>nēr-nirai</td>
<td>nēr-nirai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kāvilam</td>
<td>tēmāṅkāy</td>
<td>nēr-nēr-nēr</td>
<td>nēr-nēr-nēr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pulimāṅkāy</td>
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The most frequent stanza type still has four lines, but the number of ṇūṁ is variable from two to eight. With the disappearance of
niraipu and nērpu, 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 உறுவொண்ட ஏனா (inf.) for உற ஏனா (inf.): ஓ்ரூுடுவெனா (Tē 1.1.3.3), or the reverse, அனா ஏனா for அனா ஏனா: வாளன வாலணா (Tē 7.20.1.2).
Metrical analysis of a verse in Āciyiyappā: KT 3

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<td>vāñ-īnu-</td>
<td>muyarn-tañḍu</td>
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<td>nēr-nēr</td>
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<td>nī-riñu-</td>
<td>mā-raḷa-</td>
<td>viñ-rē</td>
<td>cā-ral</td>
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<td>nēr-nērpu</td>
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<td>karum-kōl</td>
<td>kuṟiṅ-cip</td>
<td>pūk-koṇṭu</td>
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<td>nā-ṭaṇoṭu</td>
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<th>பவீஸ்வரர்</th>
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<td>taka-li-yā</td>
<td>vār-katā-lē</td>
<td>ney-yāka</td>
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<td>நீப்பணம்</td>
<td>கதிரைக்கள்</td>
<td>கைக்காட்டாள்</td>
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<td>kati-rōn</td>
<td>vilak-kā-ka</td>
<td>cey-ya</td>
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<td>yā-naṭik-kē</td>
<td>cūṭ-ṭīṇēn-col</td>
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<td>nūn-kuka-vē</td>
<td>yenńu</td>
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Metrical analysis of a verse in (slightly irregular) Āṟucīr
Āciriyaviruttam: TVM 5.5.1

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<td>vaநெ-யோ</td>
<td>mுகா-</td>
<td>len-யோ</td>
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<td>kuti-நம்பய்</td>
<td>kan-ஹா-பின்</td>
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<td>yோ-ÿம்</td>
<td>tா-மாறிக்</td>
<td>kaந்தொ-யுத்</td>
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<td>ri-நோ</td>
<td>þம்-கெல்</td>
<td>kிய்-ra-</td>
<td>len-ன்-கமே</td>
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Metrical analysis of a verse in Kaṭṭaikkalittuṟai  
(5 cīr and 16 syllables): PK 1

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<td>mulai-yarum-pāt</td>
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<td>cem-vāy</td>
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<td>ceruc-cem</td>
<td>nilat-taiven-ra</td>
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