

Ideophones in Tamil: a Historical Perspective on the *X-enal* expressives (*Olikkurippu Ārrippaṭai*)*

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[...] *taṇṇennun tī yāṇṭup perrāḷ ivaḷ?* (*Kuraḷ* 1104)
“A fire which SAYS cold, where did she obtain it?”¹

Prelude

Although the present essay is devoted to the presentation of a feature that once appeared to me as specific of Tamil —compared to languages I had previously been acquainted with —one of the quickest way to explain its topic to the reader might be, paradoxically, to start with a quotation from a book describing one feature of Japanese²:

The vocabulary of Japanese includes a large number of words that may be broadly characterized as iconic or mimetic, that is, words whose phonetic form is felt by speakers to be imitative of natural sounds, actions and states. [...] it is in some cases difficult or impossible to provide even approximate English equivalents for these terms; moreover, those English expressions which do seem partially equivalent to Japanese iconic forms are often considered by native speakers of English to be childish or informal and of marginal lexical status. [...] When we examine the occurrence of iconic words in both spoken and written Japanese, we must conclude that such words enjoy a position in the language that is anything but marginal.³

In order to characterize the domain under consideration here,⁴ I shall start with a list of examples, drawn from various periods of the history of the Tamil

* This article would not have been what it is without my interacting with the participants in the program “Towards a typology of minor parts of speech” (PDDM-oi) inside the research federation FR2559 of CNRS, of which my own research team (UMR7597) is a founding member. Among those, a special mention goes to Stéphane Robert who first pointed out to me that the “onomatopées conceptuelles” (“conceptual onomatopoeia”) which I explored in Tamil were comparable to the “idéophones” of other languages. I also wish to thank especially my colleague Eva Wilden, with whom I have discussed several of the Classical Tamil examples and who very carefully read and commented on this paper, and Professor Asher who commented on the pre-final version.

¹ F. Gros [1992: 54] traduit: “Un feu **qui** [...] **rafraîchit** [...], où celle-ci l’a-t-elle pris?”.

² The realization that the description of Japanese might throw some light on the description of Tamil came to me during the 17th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies (Heidelberg 2002), after I had presented a paper (Chevillard[2002]) and while discussing examples with my colleagues. I wish to thank especially Takanobu Takahashi, Indira Peterson, A. Murugaiyan and Mā. Kōpālakiṣṇan.

³ Kakehi et al. [1996:xi]. This set of 2 books explores in 1460 pp. these items which are sometimes called *giseigo/gitaigo*. It contains “both fabricated and quoted examples.” The “quoted examples, numbering about 3700, are taken from approximately 850 twentieth-century literary sources”. The number of entries is not indicated by the authors, but I estimate it to exceed 2000. I could of course also have chosen as inaugural citation some passage from a work on Korean, like Lee [1992]. I have a growing awareness that such phenomena can be more fruitfully studied in a typological perspective.

⁴ The domain has been explored in the 20th cent. by M.B. Emeneau and others, but, as we shall see, interesting insights concerning it can also be obtained from studying what the ancient Indian grammarians themselves wrote, many centuries ago. Several references are given in the

language. All contain expressions which I shall designate as instances of the *X-əṇal* template, and which could be literally translated as “to SAY⁵ X”, because they contain the quotative verb *əṇal* combined with various base elements, here referred to as X. Many of these idiomatic expressions are used to express some “quality”, in a broad sense of that term. The examples are enumerated here in reverse chronological order.

- (1) *poṭave paḷapaḷaṅkutē* “The saree is glittering” (lit. “the saree SAYs *paḷapaḷa*”) [Folk song]⁶
- (2) *puṭavai paḷapaḷavenkiṛatu* [H-Tamil equivalent of the former L-Tamil example]
- (3) *kacakaca-ṇṇu irukkīṅka* “You are sticky (with sweat)” (lit. *kacakaca* SAY-CONV BE-PRES.2PL.)⁷ [Film script]⁸
- (4) *Āṭai kāyāmal picupic-əṇr-irukkīratu*⁹ “The garment does not dry and is moist”¹⁰
- (5) *avaṇ viral-ellām picupicuṇṇu iruntatu* “All his fingers were moist”¹¹
- (6) *nīr taṇṇeṇratu* “the water was fresh” (lit. water cold-SAID) (*ḷampūraṇam*, TC416i)
- (7) *varkeṇru irutti*¹² “you are harsh” (*Tēvāram*, 7-50, 4)
- (8) *purkeṇra kaṇṇum* “mes yeux sont affaiblis” (*Kuraḷ*, 1261)¹³
- (9) *tuṭkeṇraṇru eṇ tūu neṅcam* “My poor heart missed a beat”¹⁴ (“SAID *tuṭku*”) (*Ku*, 157.1-2)
- (10) *kāṇam-um kammeṇraṇru* “the forest is hushed to silence”¹⁵ (“SAID ‘*kam*’”) (*Na*, 154.1)

In this list, examples (10) and (9) are from two classical anthologies belonging to the most ancient layer of Tamil literature, whereas (8) belongs to a less ancient work. Item (7) is even later, being from the bhakti period, and (6) is from a medieval commentary. The remaining examples belong to the contemporary period, but some of them are from the colloquial L-Tamil variety whereas

bibliography. The most central one is Emeneau[1969]: “Onomatopoeics in the Indian Linguistic Area”. See also E. Annamalai[1968] and Malten [1989] for Tamil, Peri Bhaskararao [1977] for Telugu, Apte [1968] for Marathi, Nagaraja [1994] for Khasi, Hahn [1977] for Sanskrit (but more in a philological perspective than in a linguistic one), Abbi [1992] & Abbi [1994] for Indian languages in general (and for further bibliographical references).

⁵ When the quotative verb *əṇal*, which has for its main function the embedding of a piece of direct speech (or of thoughts, or of all sorts of propositional items) into a sentence is thus used “idiomatically” in *X-əṇal* expressions, I use SMALL CAPITALS for the corresponding item in my translation..

⁶ This phrase is from a song performed in a concert by the singer Puṣpavaṇam Kuppucāmi in Chennai during the TI2003 conference in August 2003. The song also contained other *X-əṇal* expressions, X being equal to *paṭapaṭa-*, *valavaḷa-*, *molamola-*, etc. For an example of a folk song with many such items, see Macqueen[1975: 126].

⁷ Grammatical information is given in small capitals: for instance, -CONV indicates an ad-verbal participle (or converb) and -PRES.2PL refers 2nd person plural in the paradigm of the present. However, detailed information is given sparsely, for lack of space.

⁸ *Muntāṇai muṭiccu* (p.16)

⁹ garment dry-NEG+CONV *picu-picu* SAY-CONV be-PRES.-3+SG+NT

¹⁰ *Tamil Lexicon*, vol. v., p. 2649.

¹¹ T. Jeyakanthan, *Iṅanta kāḷaṅkaḷ*, 74, 18. See Malten[1989: 195]. “All seine Finger waren klebrig-feucht”.

¹² *varku* SAY-CONV BE_NONPAST2SG

¹³ *purku*-SAY_Past_3NeutPlur. Translation F. Gros [1992: 123]

¹⁴ Transl. A.K. Ramanujan [1967: 65]. Shanmugam Pillai[1976: 251] has: “my purest heart is full of fear”.

¹⁵ Translation N. Kandaswamy Pillai [1970].

others are from the more formal H-Tamil.¹⁶ All in all, 8 different *X-ənal* expressions are represented here because (4) and (5) on the one hand, and (1) and (2) on the other make use of the same item. When one spans such a long period of time and such a variety of style, there are of course huge differences in morphology and in syntax, as must be evident here, but my focus will not be on that aspect. To mention just one specific point, the dominant behaviour of *X-ənal* expressions in the case of contemporary Tamil seems to be their appearance in ad-verbal position and not as main predicate as in the examples given here.¹⁷ The *ənal* component appears then mostly in the form of the converb (or *viṅṅai eccam*): *əṅṅu* for H-Tamil,¹⁸ and *-ṅṅu* for L-Tamil. These forms are characterized by Asher[1982: 242], in his description of Contemporary Tamil, in the following way (his characterization being accompanied by a list of 29 items):

[...] uninflected onomatopoeic forms [...] normally followed by the quotative particle *-ṅṅu*, the whole expression generally functioning as an adverb. [...] Reduplication is common. [...] The set is at least to some extent an open one.

Asher seems to be the first to have used the term “ideophone” in connection with Tamil¹⁹—this is how he designates these items—and I have followed him, although the class of items which I examine is broader than the one he examines, both from a chronological and from a syntactic point of view.²⁰ Other terms are also met with in the literature, but I feel it is more appropriate to discuss terminological questions after exploring the linguistic phenomenon under study, which has here been defined by a formal criterion—namely being an instance of the *X-ənal* template.

To remain in the preliminary remarks, another question that might arise is how pertinent it is to insist on giving “literal” translations alongside the global translations. An answer valid for all periods is impossible, but I shall simply remark that it makes sense explicitly for at least one of the examples mentioned, because (6) “*nīr taṅṅeṅṅratu*” has been adduced by the commentator Ḵampūraṅar as an illustration for a *sūtra* asserting that there are occasions when one mentions as SAYING (something) those things that are not reputed to speak (*əṅṅā marapiṅa v-əṅṅak kūrūtal*): this *sūtra* is found in the *Book on Words*, the second

¹⁶ For the distinction between H-Tamil and L-Tamil, and the diglossic situation in Tamil, see E. Annamalai’s contribution in this volume. For a detailed study of diglossia in Tamil, see Britto[1986].

¹⁷ There has been a lot of variation, in the course of history, as regards the syntactic freedom of *X-ənal* expressions, as will be evident from all the examples mentioned in the course of this presentation: we shall see them not only in predicate and in ad-verbal positions, but also in adjectival positions. All this would require a full-fledged study, which I hope to give some day. This essay is only a first exploration.

¹⁸ In H-Tamil, we can also have the infinitival form (or “absolute”) *əṅṅa*, another type of *viṅṅai eccam*.

¹⁹ Since then, the term has been used in Bh. Krishnamurti [2003: 485-486].

²⁰ As far as Spoken Contemporary Tamil is concerned, reference must also be made to Schiffman[1999: 181-183], who gives a list of 21 terms and explains that “onomatopoeic expressions, similar to words in English like ‘bang, crash, thud, whiz, zap, zonk, crunch’, etc. are formed in Tamil by prefixing the onomatopoeic item before *-ṅṅu*. The structure of these emulates a ‘quotative construction’, i.e., it is as if there is a sound of some sort being quoted.”

book of *Tolkāppiyam*,²¹ the most ancient Tamil grammar, and the commentators differ as to what is a fitting example. A more recent one, Cēṇāvaraiyar, reproaches Ṇampūraṇar, his predecessor, for his choice of (6), arguing that the *eṇratu* which we have here does not mean “it said” (as it would if it had its primary value). A temporal distance of one or two centuries, of course, prevents Ṇampūraṇar from answering, but at least we learn a few things in this one-way dialogue which took place between scholars from the XIth and XIIIth centuries commenting on a text generally considered to be, at least, not later than the Vth century:

- there are phrases in Tamil with a word which *seems to mean* “to say”.
- there are indirect ways of describing the properties of things, and these ways are sometimes more eloquent (or expressive)

Having concluded this prelude with the conviction that there is some degree of naturalness in examining the elements falling under the *X-eṇal* template, my goal, in the following sections, will be to examine the various X items with which Tamil, in the course of its history, has been constantly enriching its vocabulary, in a never-ending quest for expressivity.

X-eṇal* expressions inside the *Tēvāram

While studying a linguistic phenomenon from a general point of view, a possible convenient observatory is a corpus of texts that belongs to the middle period of the recorded history of the language in question. It allows one to see a state of affairs in a temporal dynamic perspective because it is thus possible to make comparisons both with the earlier periods and with the more recent ones.²² For that reason, the present study, after the prelude part, will have as its real starting point a corpus of Later Classical Tamil texts nowadays called *Tēvāram* (TEV).²³ Its vocabulary contains a number of those items that have been

²¹ The verse is sūtra 422 in Cēṇāvaraiyar’s commentary on *Tolk. Col*. It reads: *vārā maraṇṇa varak kūrūtal-um* (1) / *eṇṇā maraṇṇa v-eṇak kūrūtal-um* (2) / *aṇṇavai y-ellām avayr-avayr-iyalpāṇ* (3) / *iṇṇa v-eṇṇum kurippurāi y-ākum* (4). I translated this into French in Chevillard[1996: 514]: “Mentionner comme ‘venant’ ceux qui normalement ne viennent pas, (1) / Mentionner comme ‘disant’ ceux qui normalement ne disent [mot] (2) / Toutes les [expressions] telles (3a) / Sont paroles suggestives, qui disent [en fait] ‘[ces choses] sont telles’ (4) / Au moyen des comportements [qui sont prêts] à chacune (3b)”.

²² I should also add to that preliminary remark, that, as we have just seen with our observations on the “debate” between Ṇam. and Cēṇā., when these observations of descriptive linguistics can be correlated with an appraisal of independent observations made by native scholars, lexicographers or grammarians, the “depth of field” (using the parlance of photographers) can be further increased, provided one keeps apart, as dual separate components, the “Description of Linguistic History” (DLH) on the one hand, where one records what one sees, and the history of description, be it a “History of Lexical Description” (HLD) or a “History of Grammatical Description” (HGD) on the other hand, where one reports about what others have said. In this spirit, while fulfilling my DLH task I shall consider myself as a descriptive linguist, but I shall be a historian of linguistics while working on HLD and HGD.

²³ This will be the point of departure for the DLH task which has been defined in the preceding footnote. As for the HLD and HGD tasks, their starting points shall be, respectively, traditional (non-alphabetical) Tamil lexicons, from the *Tivākaram* onwards, and the medieval commentaries,

presented in the prelude part, example (7) being one of them, and if we try to enumerate them exhaustively, we come up with the following chart (chart 1):

<i>X-eṇal</i>	<i>Tēvāram</i> example (and ref.)	Other ref.
S1 ²⁴ : <i>kalleṇal</i>	<i>kalleṇa</i> uḷitarum “who are wandering <u>making a big noise</u> ” [2.91.10] (VMS)	
S3: <i>taṇṇeṇal</i>	<i>kāra mutu koṇṇai kaṭināru taṇ eṇṇa</i> “the fragrance of the old koṇṇai flowers that blossom in winter <u>to be cool</u> ” ²⁵ [4.19.9]	
S20: <i>tunṇeṇal</i>	<i>tunṇeṇṇu</i> eḷuntiruntēṇ [6.13.6] “I woke up <u>startled</u> ” (VMS)	2.3.6, 2.4.5, 3.81.7, 5.19.4, 5.77.5, 7.76.2
S34: <i>cikkeṇal</i>	<i>teruṇṭa vāy iṭai nūl koṇṭu cilanti // cittirap pantar cikkeṇa iyaṇṇa</i> [7.66.2] “The skillful spider wove a wondrous <u>dense</u> canopy with threads from its mouth [to shelter you]” (Shulman [1990: 424])	4.59.1, 4.59.2, 4.59.7, 5.31.8, 5.39.2, 5.71.9
S36: <i>kiṇiṇeṇal</i>	<i>maṇi kiṇiṇeṇa</i> varu kuraikalal cilampu ārkka [2.104.1] “the tiny bell in it <u>to make a sound resembling ‘kinin’</u> and the anklet to produce a sound” (VMS)	
S37: <i>kiṇṇeṇal</i>	<i>kiṇṇeṇṇu</i> icai muralum tiruk kētāram [7.78.7] “T. where the sweet sound of ‘kiṇ’ is produced” (VMS)	
S38: <i>vaṇṇeṇal</i>	<i>vaṇṇeṇṇu</i> irutti [7.50.4] “you are a <u>little bit hard</u> ” (VMS)	
S39: <i>tiṇṇeṇal</i>	<i>tiṇṇeṇ</i> viṇaikalait tirkkum pirāṇ [4.90.6] “the master will remove the <u>very strong</u> and irresistible karmam-s (of devotees)” (VMS)	1.78.1, 2.4.5, 4.2.1, 7.45.2, 7.46.9
S40: <i>veṭṭeṇal</i>	<i>veṭṭeṇa</i> pēcaṇmiṇ [7.44.3] “don’t talk <u>disparagingly</u> ” (VMS)	
S41 ²⁶ : <i>miṇṇeṇal</i>	<i>tikalāru mārpīṇil miṇṇeṇa</i> miḷivatu ṅ aravinar [3.85.6] “has a cobra which is gleaming <u>like lightning</u> on the shining chest” (VMS)	
S42: <i>mūceṇal</i>	<i>mūceṇum</i> [7.36.2] “[the cobra] <u>makes a hissing sound</u> ” (VMS)	
S43: <i>nerukkeṇal</i>	<i>nerukkeṇa</i> nirutta viralāl [3.68.8] “(who crushed) by the toe which practises dance, (so as) to <u>produce the sound ‘nerukku’</u> ” (VMS)	
S44: <i>mummeṇal</i>	<i>mummeṇṇu</i> icai mural vaṇṭukaḷ [1.11.3] “the bees which hum <u>like the sound ‘mum’</u> ” (VMS)	
S45: <i>ummeṇal</i>	<i>ummeṇṇu</i> eḷum aruvittiraḷ [1.13.3] “the collection of streams <u>which produces a sound ‘hum’</u> ” (VMS)	
S46: <i>mommeṇal</i> (Var. <i>ommeṇal</i>)	<i>tāmommeṇap</i> paṇai [3.102.8] “the drum <u>which makes a sound like ‘mom’</u> ” (VMS)	
R1: <i>kaṇakaṇa-veṇal</i>	<i>katam miku karu uruvoṭu ukir iṭai vaṭavarai kaṇakaṇaveṇa</i> [1.21.7] “the mountain Meru, which is in the North, to make a sound resembling ‘gaṇagaṇa’ ²⁷ in its nail assuming a great form with excessive anger” (VMS)	

from the *ḷampūraṇam* onwards, which were composed around the *Tolkāppiyam*, the earliest extant Tamil grammar.

²⁴ The numbering system used here is a chronological extension of the one used in chart 3a.

²⁵ I have remarked in Chevillard[2000: 733, fn.6] that VMS’s English syntax is influenced by Tamil.

²⁶ There can be doubt whether this is really a *X-eṇal* expression.

<i>X-ena</i>	<i>Tēvāram</i> example (and ref.)	Other ref.
R2: <i>kalakaleṇal</i>	<i>ayaḷ nilavu mutu vēy kalakaleṇa oḷi koḷ katir muttam</i> [3.69.5] “[Kāḷatti’s hill, rich in ...] bamboos that shed sparkling pearls” (I. Peterson [1989: 174]) ²⁸	
R3: <i>nerunerēṇal</i>	<i>arakkar kōṇai nerunerēṇa aṭarttiṭṭa nilaiyum</i> [6.18.11] “the state of pressing down the king of arakkar ... to produce the sound ‘neruneru’ ” (VMS)	
R4: <i>kūkūveṇal</i>	<i>kūkūveṇa alaikkum</i> [7.50.9] “where [the black cock ...] sends its call” (Shulman)	
R5: <i>āvāveṇal</i>	<i>“āvā!” eṇa arakkaṇ alara aṭarttiṭṭu</i> [1.89.7] “having pressed down the <i>arakkaṇ</i> to roar saying ‘alas’” (VMS)	
E1: <i>tiṭukumoṭṭēṇal</i>	<i>tiṭukumoṭṭēṇak kutti, kūṛai koṇṭu</i> [7.49.1] “[Vaṭukar tribesmen ...] who jump on travellers with fierce yells , stab them, and rob them of their wealth.” (I. Peterson [1989: 179])	

Chart 1: *X-ena* expressions inside *Tēvāram*

The 21 expressions which are listed in this chart have, according to my initial assumption, a common morphology, but the French (or English) reader who considers them one by one will be tempted to say that some of them (like S36, S42, R4, etc.) are onomatopoeic and that R5 should be called an interjection. However, categorizing other items might appear to him more problematic. I shall postpone the discussion on whether it is acceptable to group all these items together until a later stage; some arguments for an answer will be given when we discuss the formulation found in *Tivākaram*.

The initial letter (S, R or E) of the labels in the first column indicates sub-categories inside the set of all *X-ena* expressions. Those labels that start with “R” indicate “R-items”, having internal reduplication, as what we see in *kaṇa-kaṇa*. Similarly, we talk about “S-items” for those that are simple. Lastly, we have to make a provision for “E-items”, a category which has become much more visible in later Tamil, as we shall see, although it is almost not represented here.²⁹

The *Tēvāram* data in a dynamic perspective

To put things into perspective, the data which have been given for the *Tēvāram* in chart 1 have to be compared with the data from other texts. As of today, the most comprehensive source of information about Tamil vocabulary (without distinction of period) is contained in the more than 4400 pages of the *Tamil*

²⁷ Since this article is based on classical texts mostly transmitted now in written form, there will be little scope here for discussions concerning the “real” pronunciation. However, since the translator (VMS) has spontaneously used a voiced initial, this item can be considered as an element in the debate which is at the heart of an article by M.B. Emeneau et Kausalya Hart [1993, BSOAS]. The problem of voicing in Tamil is also at the heart of the contribution by I. Mahadevan in this Felicitation volume.

²⁸ VMS’s translation is: “the hill Kāḷatti where the mature bamboo which stands by the side scatters pearls of bright rays making a sound ‘kalakala’ ”

²⁹ The only example given here, *tiṭukumoṭṭēṇal*, is not, I admit, a good representative of the class.

Lexicon (7 vol.). In a recent study, I have made a preliminary examination of that data.³⁰ The distribution of the items is summarized by the Chart 2a (see below) where 613 *X-ənal* expressions listed by this dictionary have been taken into consideration. The contents of S and R columns have already been illustrated by items from Chart 1; the E and IP columns will be explained shortly. As for the lines of the chart, they reflect the distinction between items “without suffix” (like for instance S1, S3, S20, etc.) and items “with suffix”, like for instance S38 (*vaṛkeṇal*) and S43 (*nerukkeṇal*), which both contain the “-ku” suffix.³¹

Number of items	S (simple)	R (redup.)	E (echo)	IP ³² (intensive prefixed)	Total
without suffix	120	231	41	5	392
with suffix	115	70	36		221
Total	235	301 ³³	77	5	618

Chart 2a: Distribution of *X-ənal* expressions in the Tamil lexicon³⁴

The main problem with the data found in the *Tamil Lexicon* is of course that it does not give us a precise picture for any given period, because its scope is global. It thus needs to be completed by explorations limited to specific samples, such as our *Tēvāram*. On the model of Chart 2a, we can draw a Chart 2b that will give us a profile of the *Tēvāram* corpus:

Number of items	S (simple)	R (redup.)	E (echo)	Total
without suffix	12	5	1?	18
with suffix	3			3
Total	15	5	1	21

Chart 2b: Distribution of *X-ənal* expressions in the *Tēvāram*

This profile can then be compared with profiles built for other homogeneous corpora of texts. To give just a hint of what the result of a comparison with contemporary Tamil might be, I have made a casual search through the scripts

³⁰ See Chevillard [2002]. This preliminary study was made possible through the kind help of my German colleagues from Cologne University, who have made accessible online, a database (O.T.L.) containing all the entries of the *Tamil Lexicon*, from which I was thus able to retrieve all the items corresponding to the *X-ənal* template.

³¹ The presence of suffixes may appear blurred, of course, by morphophonological adjustments. In the case of the *-ku* suffix, TL contains for instance 37 S-type items with *-kku* (like *kaṭukkeṇal*, *kukukkeṇal*, etc.), 8 S-type items with *-ku* (like *civiṭkeṇal*, *tuṭkeṇal*, etc.), 32 R-type items with *-kku* (like *avakkavakkeṇal*, *kapukkukkapukkeṇal*, etc.). See Chevillard[2002] for the complete lists.

³² This is a special small class, containing basic colour terms with an intensifying prefix. Examples are *kannāṅkarēṇal* (pitch-like darkness), *cekkacivēṇal* (deep red), *paccāipacēṇal* (deep green) and *vellaivēṇal* (exceedingly white).

³³ The R-type has been studied in detail in Malten[1989].

³⁴ This is abridged from Chevillard[2002] where the complete lists are given.

of some recent films: *Alaikal̥ ōvattillai* (AO, 1981) and *Muntānai muṭiccu* (MM, 1983). The items found are (in the Tamil alphabetical order):

kacacacannu (MM, p. 16),
korkornuṭṭu (MM, p. 49),
kolakolanu (MM, p. 19),
caṭṭupuṭṭunnu (MM, p. 33),
carrunnu (AO, p. 4)
tirutirunnu (MM, p.15),
tonatonannu (MM, p.15),
nēkkunnu (AO, p. 5).
nainainnu (MM, p. 20),
nainainainnuṭṭu (MM, p. 35),
naiyinaiyinnuṭṭu (MM, p. 49),
vatavatannu (MM, p. 10),
vellaivelēṛnu (MM, p. 19),

The profile of the distribution is as follows:

Number of items	S (simple)	R (redup.)	E (echo)	IP (intensive prefixed)	Total
without suffix	2	7	1	1	11

Chart 2c: Distribution of X-*enal* expressions in 1980s film scripts

In these examples, the *enal* component appears under various forms: *-nnu*, *-nu*, *-nnuṭṭu*, *-nuṭṭu* and the X component belongs to one of 4 types: S, R, E or IP. Since the S-type and the R-type³⁵ have already been explained, it will be sufficient to point out the two remaining types: the E-type (with echo reduplication), which is illustrated by *caṭṭupuṭṭu-nnu*, and the IP-type, which is illustrated by *vellaivelēṛ-nu*. It is a feature of contemporary spoken Tamil, that R-type expressions are more frequent than S-type and E-type. As far as IP-type expressions are concerned, they seem to occur only for the small set of colour terms. A detailed study of the R-type³⁶ has been made in Malten[1989], but some of the items which we have just found in these contemporary films dialogues are still missing from it.³⁷ No similar detailed study seems to be available for the two other types. Tamil is not as well studied as Japanese in this respect.

³⁵ I consider items like *nainainainainnuṭṭu* as belonging to the R-type, although *nai* is repeated more than once.

³⁶ To be more precise, Malten's goal is different, because he not only studies what I have defined as X-*enal* expressions belonging to the R-type, but also verbal expressions with reduplicated root where no *-enal* component is found. His study includes 229 items.

³⁷ The missing items are: *vatavata-*, *nainai-* (with its variant *naiyinaiyi-*) and *korkor-*. As remarked by Asher [1985: 242], "the set is at least to some extent an open one (in the sense that the possibility is open to speakers to invent new ones)". We see that they have made use of that freedom quite often.

The *Tēvāram* data compared with its past

Charts 2a and 2c have given us clues concerning the future developments of the *Tēvāram* data. We shall now examine the evidence which can be gathered concerning the past, where the *Tēvāram* has its roots, and which is presented in chart 3 immediately below. This is a list of all the *X-ēnal* expressions which I have been able to find inside four Early Classical Tamil anthologies: *Akanānūru* (Ak), *Puraṇānūru* (Pu), *Narriṇai* (Na) and *Kuruntokai* (Ku). They have been ordered by decreasing frequency, starting with the most frequent of them all, *kalleṇal*, which is met with 45 times, and the columns on the right hand-side give the number of occurrences in each of the 4 anthologies.

<i>X-ēnal</i>	Examples	Ak	Pu	Na	Ku	Tot.
S1: <i>kalleṇal</i>	<i>kalleṇa/ ūr eḷuntaṇṇa uru keḷu celaviṇ</i> [Ak, 17, 10-11] “Their movement strikes fear because it looks as if a whole village is on the move, <u>with a great uproar</u> ” (VMS)	17	13	11	4	45
S2: <i>pullēṇal</i>	<i>evvi ilanta vaṟumaiyar pānar/ pū il vaṟuntalai pōlap pullēṇru</i> [Ku, 19, 1-2] “ <u>bereft</u> like the harpists made poor through Evvi’s death, whose heads are no longer adorned with flowers” ³⁸	15	8	5	7	35
S3: <i>taṇ-ṇēṇal</i>	<i>tanneṇa malarum</i> [Ak, 150.11] “blossom <u>with coolness</u> ” (VMS)	10	4	6	4	24
S4: <i>paiyēṇal</i>	<i>patalai oru kaṇ paiyēṇa iyakkumiṇ</i> [Pu, 152.17] “ <u>Softly</u> beat on one of the eyes of the patalai drum” ³⁹	13	5	5	1	24
S5: <i>naḷḷēṇal</i>	<i>naḷḷēṇarṇrē yāmam col avintu/ iṇitu aṇṅkiṇarē mākkal</i> [Ku, 6, 1-2] “ <u>The still drone</u> of the time/ past midnight/ all words put out/ men are sunk into the sweetness” ⁴⁰	6	1	8	7	22
S6: <i>oyyēṇa</i> ⁴¹	<i>oyyēṇa/ uru murai marapiṇ puṟam niṇṇu uykkum/ kūrrattu anaiyai</i> [Pu, 98, 15-17] “you are like Death who will always move <u>swiftly</u> / from behind and will strike in an instant to carry away the life” ⁴²	11	4	5	1	21

³⁸ Translation Marr[1958/1985: 22].

³⁹ Translation G. L. Hart & Hank Heifetz [1999: 96].

⁴⁰ Translation A.K. Ramanujan[1967: 20]. One traditional interpretation is that *naḷḷēṇal* expresses a subdued noise. It is, so to speak, the sound of silence. Hart[1979: 49] translates the same passage as “The night is half gone./ Without words, people are calm and quiet.” In doing this, he might be trying to connect *naḷḷēṇal* with *naḷ* “middle”. It is, however, difficult to find out with certainty the original value of *naḷḷēṇal* because it is almost always used in formulas where it is connected with words belonging to the same semantic field (midnight, night, obscurity).

⁴¹ For the expressions listed here, I use the quotation form which is found in the *Tamil Lexicon*. This quotation form usually ends in *ēnal*, but in a few cases, like S-6, it is different. See also *terreṇavu* (= S-14) below. I shall not discuss here the reasons for this difference in treatment, since they are not clear to me.

⁴² Translation G. L. Hart & Hank Heifetz [1999: 69].

<i>X-ənal</i>	Examples	Ak	Pu	Na	Ku	Tot.
S7: <i>imneṅal</i>	<i>varai iḷi aruwiṭ pāṭṭotu pīracam/ mulaṅu cēr narampiṅ imneṅa imirum</i> [Ak, 318, 5-6] “[that country ...]/ where the music of waterfalls /mingles with bee sounds / as drums with lute-strings” ⁴³	5	2	6	-	13
S8: <i>iḷu-meṅal</i>	<i>iḷumeṅa iḷitarum aruvi</i> [Pu, 399.33] “down which a waterfall descends, roaring in rythm ” ⁴⁴	3	6	-	2	11
S9: <i>olṅal</i>	<i>olṅa/ kaḷiyē ṅtam māḷiṅṅu</i> [Ak, 340, 8-9] “The waves in the back-water have risen with a sound resembling ‘ol’ ” (VMS)	5	2	1	1	9
S10: <i>aiyeṅal</i>	<i>vaḷai uṭaittanaiyatu āki, palar toḷa,/ cev vāy vāṅattu aiyeṅat tōṅṅi</i> [Ku, 307, 1-2] “Look:/ the crescent moon suddenly / appears in the reddening sky/ like a broken bangle,/ for many to worship” ⁴⁵	5	-	-	3	8
S11: <i>katu-meṅal</i>	<i>notumalar pōla pīriyṅ katumeṅa/ pīritu oṅṅu ākal um aṅcuval</i> [Ak, 300, 11-12] “if you part [and go away] like a stranger, [without any consideration], I am afraid that she may meet with her end, suddenly ” (VMS)	4	1	3	1	9
S12: <i>kam-meṅal</i>	[TL.2] ⁴⁶ <i>kāṅamum kammeṅraṅṅu</i> [Na, 154.1] “The forest is hushed to silence ” ⁴⁷ [TL.3] <i>kammeṅa / vāṅṅu virittāṅṅa poṅku maṅṅar kāṅ yāṅṅu/ paṅu ciṅai tāḷṅta payil iṅar ekkar/ mey pukuṅu aṅṅa kai kaṅṅar muṅyakkam / aṅṅarum peṅṅuṅṅar maṅṅē</i> / [Ak, 11, 7-11] “on the dunes/ overhung with flowering boughs,/ all fragrant , where the forest stream flows now/ and the sand/ is laid out like a woman’s bodice,/ he could have what arms desire,/ loving embraces, body entering body” ⁴⁸ [TL.4] <i>pommal paṅu tirai kammeṅa uṭaittarum</i> [Ak, 200.8] “where the roaring waves of beautiful appearance dash and break quickly ” (VMS)	5	1	2	-	8

⁴³ Transl. A.K. Ramanujan [1985: 14].

⁴⁴ Transl. Hart & Heifetz [1999: 240].

⁴⁵ Transl. Shanmugam Pillai & Ludden [1976: 431]. “Suddenly” might not be the best possible translation. One is tempted to compare the *ai* inside *aiyeṅal* with the one mentioned in *Tol. Col. 385 (Cēṅā)*: *ai viyappu ākum* “*ai* is/[expresses] awe/astonishment”. In that case, *aiyeṅa* would express the awe felt by the worshippers.

⁴⁶ TL gives 4 possible meanings for *kammeṅal*, with literary quotations given as references for 3 of them, which we indicate here as TL2, TL3 and TL4.

⁴⁷ Translation by N. Kandaswamy Pillai [1970].

⁴⁸ Translation by A.K. Ramanujan [1985: 55], who has chosen TL3, *i.e.* the 3rd meaning of *kammeṅal*. However, it is interesting to note that it is precisely this example which had been chosen by the editors of TL to illustrate meaning TL4. VMS[1975] makes a translation choice which follows TL: “he too would have enjoyed **quickly** the tight embrace out of love, which the arms are very eager for and which is like one body entering into another, in the sand dune which has low big branches with abundant bunches of flowers, in the forest river which has much sand resembling an upper garment that has been expanded and spread out”.

<i>X-ənal</i>	Examples	Ak	Pu	Na	Ku	Tot.
S13: <i>melleṇal</i>	<i>melleṇa taliyiṇēṇ</i> [Ak, 49.7] “I [...] <u>slightly</u> embraced her” (VMS)	5	1	1	-	7
S14: <i>terre- ṇavu</i>	<i>maṟṟum maṟṟum viṇavutum terreṇa</i> [...] <i>kūrumiṇ emakkē</i> [Pu, 173.10-12] “over and over again we ask, ‘Give us a <u>straight answer</u> ’” ⁴⁹	1	3	-	3	7
S15: <i>valleṇal</i>	<i>nīṭātu valleṇa</i> [Ak, 254.18] “without delay, [you have brought me] <u>quickly</u> near the village” (VMS)	3	2	-	-	5
S16: <i>ṇe- rēṇal</i>	<i>kalleṇ cummaiṇār ṇērēṇa pukutantu</i> [Ak, 86.18] “[The relations ...] entering <u>in haste</u> [into the marriage house] with tumultuous noise” (VMS)	2	1	-	1	4
S17: <i>tuṭu- meṇal</i>	<i>nīr kuṭṭattut tuṭumeṇa vīlum</i> [Na, 280.3] “where [the sweet fruit ...] falls <u>with a splashing sound</u> in the water ditch” ⁵⁰		1	2	-	3
S18: <i>tavveṇal</i>	<i>ōtamum oli ḍviṇṇē ūtaiyum / tātu ular kāṇal tavveṇṇarṇē</i> [Na, 319, 1-2] “The sound of the ocean is stilled and the wind, spreading pollen has <u>dimmed</u> the grove” ⁵¹		-	1	2	3
S19: <i>veḷḷeṇal</i>	<i>veḷḷeṇa/ āṇṭu nī peyarnta piṇṇum</i> [Pu, 359, 16-17] “then <u>after all have seen</u> you go/ to the other world” ⁵²		3	-	-	3
S20: <i>tuṇ- neṇal</i>	<i>arum curam celvōr neṇcam tuṇneṇa</i> [Ak, 87.9] “[The sound produced by the fearless warriors in the <i>tuṇṇumai</i> drum] is heard by travellers and <u>strikes fear</u> in their hearts” (VMS)	1	-	-	-	1
S21: <i>tuṭkeṇal</i>	“ <i>kukkū</i> ” <i>eṇṇratu kōḷi; ataṇ etir/ tuṭkeṇṇarṇu eṇ tūu neṇcam</i> [Ku, 157, 1-2] “Co Coo/ crowed the cock/ and my poor heart <u>missed a beat</u> ” ⁵³		-	-	1	1
S22: <i>kāreṇal</i>	<i>kāreṇ okkal</i> [Pu, 141.6] “your family burned black under the sun” ⁵⁴		1			1
S23: <i>kiṭi- neṇal</i>	<i>kiṭiṇeṇa iṭikkum kōl toṭi maṇavar</i> [Na, 48.6] “[driving away] the desert dwellers, [the wielders of frequently sharpened arrows], with ferruled staffs striking (heavily sounding) as <i>kiṭiṇ</i> (onomat.)” ⁵⁵		-	1	-	1
Total		111	59	57	38	264

Chart 3a: *X-ənal* expressions found in Early Classical Tamil (ECT)

⁴⁹ Translation G. L. Hart & Hank Heifetz [1999: 172].

⁵⁰ Translation N. Kandaswamy Pillai [1970].

⁵¹ Translation G. L. Hart [1979].

⁵² Translation G. L. Hart & Hank Heifetz [1999: 204]. The primary meaning of *veḷ* is white. But here, the expression *veḷḷeṇa* (litt. “whitely”) seems to refer to the fact that nothing is hidden from the public view. Compare with *Puṇanāṇṇuru* 207, 9-11: *veḷḷeṇa/ nōvātōṇ vayiṇ tiraṅki/ vāyā vaṇ kaṇṇikku ulamaruvōrē* “who would choose to linger shriveling up inside,/ ignored in public, to win a piece of raw fruit from an uncaring person!” (Ibid. p.131).

⁵³ Translation A.K. Ramanujan [1967: 65]. A short form already appeared as example (9).

⁵⁴ Translation G. L. Hart & Hank Heifetz [1999: 89]

⁵⁵ Translation N. Kandaswamy Pillai [1970].

<i>X-ənal</i>	Ak	Pu	Na	Ku	Tot.
Total	111	58	57	38	263
Distinct items	17	18	14	14	22
Lines	7151	5441	4181	2504	19277
Density (%) ⁵⁶	1.55	1.07	1.36	1.52	1.36

Chart 3b: Density of *X-ənal* expressions in ECT

As will be clear from the examples and from the notes that accompany them, many of these items would deserve a full-fledged study, to try to get as close as possible to their original intended meaning, and many of the available translations are probably not precise enough. However, for the time being, I shall only remark that in ECT, *X-ənal* expressions were often inflected,⁵⁷ and could be found in ad-nominal position (verbal root or relative participle forms), in ad-verbal position (converb forms) or in predicate position (finite verb form). This inflectional freedom was reduced in the course of the history of Tamil, and this is why the modern heirs of these items could be characterized as “uninflected” by Asher[1982: 242].⁵⁸

Establishing the *X-ənal* spectrum of specific texts

The descriptive (DLH) task which was started in the preceding sections could, in a slightly simplified way, be explicitly summarized in the following way:

Provided that they fulfill a morphological condition, which has been stated as “being an instance of the *X-ənal* template”, and provided that they are recognized as “expressions” by “(extended) native speakers of classical Tamil”,⁵⁹ some strings belong to the “spectrum of *X-ənal* expressions” for a given text.

Using a functional notation, we could now re-state the first results of our investigations:

(11) *X-ənal*-Spectrum[Ak+Pu+Na+Ku] = {*kalleṇal* (S1), *pulleṇal* (S2), ..., *kiṭṭiṇeṇal* (S22)}

(12) *X-ənal*-Spectrum[*Tēvāram*] = {*kalleṇal* (S1), *taṇṇeṇal* (S3), S20, S32, S44, ..., E1}

Such a task can be accomplished on other texts, and I briefly give here now some of the results obtained by me, singling out the items not met with so far:

⁵⁶ This is obtained by dividing the number of *X-ənal* expressions in the text by its number of lines.

⁵⁷ More details in Chevillard[2002].

⁵⁸ However, inflected forms are still occasionally met with today, as we have seen from example (1).

⁵⁹ This convoluted description, which is of course begging for discussion (or criticism!), is intended to restrict our choice to “expressions” that are recognized as such, one obvious criterion being the inclusion in the TL, with the “*expr.*” (or “*onom. expr.*”) label. Expressions not listed as such in the TL can also be included, provided reasonable argument can be given, for instance in terms of paraphrases found for them in traditional commentaries. See for instance Naccinārkkīṇiyar on *Pattup pāṭṭu*, *Neṭu*. 185 (UVS [1961: 465]) for an example of the type of “information” available in a commentary.

Work	<i>X-eṇal</i> -Spectrum (conservative part)	<i>X-eṇal</i> -Spectrum (innovative part)	Density ⁶⁰
<i>Patirruppattu</i> (PATI)	<i>kalleṇal</i> (S1), <i>pullēṇal</i> (S2), <i>taṇṇēṇal</i> (S3), <i>iḷumeṇal</i> (S8), <i>aiyeṇal</i> (S10)		0.47%
<i>Aiṅkurunūru</i> (AI)	<i>kalleṇal</i> (S1), <i>pullēṇal</i> (S2), <i>taṇṇēṇal</i> (S3), <i>naḷḷēṇal</i> (S5), <i>olleṇal</i> (S9), <i>tuṭumeṇal</i> (S17)	<i>nalleṇal</i> (S24)⁶¹	0.6%
<i>Pattuppāṭṭu</i> (PP)	<i>kalleṇal</i> (S1), <i>pullēṇal</i> (S2), <i>taṇṇēṇal</i> (S3), <i>naḷḷēṇal</i> (S5), <i>oyyeṇa</i> (S6), <i>immeṇal</i> (S7), <i>iḷumeṇal</i> (S8), <i>olleṇal</i> (S9), <i>katumeṇal</i> (S11), <i>melleṇal</i> (S13), <i>ṇērēṇal</i> (S16), <i>taṅveṇal</i> (S18)	<i>metteṇal</i> (S25)	1.18%
<i>Paripāṭal</i> ⁶² (PAR)		<i>kommeṇal</i> (S26)	0.05%
<i>Kalittokai</i> (KAL)	<i>kalleṇal</i> (S1), <i>pullēṇal</i> (S2), <i>taṇṇēṇal</i> (S3), <i>paiyeṇal</i> (S4), <i>oyyeṇa</i> (S6), <i>immeṇal</i> (S7), <i>olleṇal</i> (S9), <i>katumeṇal</i> (S11), <i>terreṇavu</i> (S14), <i>valleṇal</i> (S15)	<i>ammeṇal</i> (S27), <i>taiyeṇal</i> (S28)	1.02%

Chart 4a: Distribution of *X-eṇal* expressions in other ECT Texts

Work	<i>X-eṇal</i> -Sample (conservative part)	<i>X-eṇal</i> -Sample (innovative part)	Density
<i>Kuraḷ</i> (TK)	<i>pullēṇal</i> (S2), <i>taṇṇēṇal</i> (S3), <i>katumeṇal</i> (S11), <i>taṅveṇal</i> (S18)	<i>purkeṇal</i> (S29), <i>poḷḷēṇal</i> (S30)	0.23%
<i>Nālaṭi</i> ⁶³ (NĀL)	<i>kalleṇal</i> (S1), <i>paiyeṇal</i> (S4), <i>immeṇal</i> (S7), <i>olleṇal</i> (S9), <i>terreṇavu</i> (S14), <i>kāreṇal</i> (S22)	<i>kaṭukkeṇal</i> (S31)	0.44%
<i>Cilappatikāram</i> (CIL)	<i>kalleṇal</i> (S1), <i>pullēṇal</i> (S2), <i>oyyeṇa</i> (S6), <i>iḷumeṇal</i> (S8), <i>olleṇal</i> (S9), <i>tuṇṇēṇal</i> (S20)	<i>ceṅveṇal</i> (S32)	NC
<i>Maṇimēkalai</i> (MAN)	<i>kalleṇal</i> (S1), <i>pullēṇal</i> (S2), <i>taṇṇēṇal</i> (S3), <i>iḷumeṇal</i> (S8), <i>aiyeṇal</i> (S10), <i>terreṇavu</i> (S14), <i>veḷḷēṇal</i> (S19) ⁶⁴	<i>iḷiṇēṇal</i> (S33), <i>cikkeṇal</i> (S34)	NC
<i>Cīvaka- cintāmaṇi</i> ⁶⁵ (CIV)	<i>kalleṇal</i> (S1), <i>pullēṇal</i> (S2), <i>taṇṇēṇal</i> (S3), <i>paiyeṇal</i> (S4), <i>oyyeṇa</i> (S6), <i>immeṇal</i> (S7), <i>olleṇal</i> (S9), <i>melleṇal</i> (S13), <i>tuṭkeṇal</i> (S21)	<i>kommeṇal</i> (S26), <i>ammeṇal</i> (S27), <i>purkeṇal</i> (S29), <i>poḷḷēṇal</i> (S30), <i>iḷiṇēṇal</i> (S33), <i>po- meṇal</i> (S35), <i>kiṇiṇēṇal</i> (S36)	NC

⁶⁰ See footnote 56. "NC" signifies "not computed". I have already pointed out, in Chevillard[2002], that the various anthologies and works composed in Earlier Classical Tamil and Later Classical Tamil have very different densities, as appears from these figures. They must of course be handled carefully.

⁶¹ This last item is a doubtful *X-eṇal* expression, but I include it here for the sake of completion. See *Aiṅkurunūru* 374-1.

⁶² I am surprised by the very low frequency for *Paripāṭal*, which results from the fact that only 1 occurrence (of 1 single item: *kommeṇal*) is found in the whole of the 1833 lines of what remains from that anthology. One might wonder whether this has really been composed by a native speaker of Tamil or whether the whole text might not simply be a translation from another language (Sanskrit?).

⁶³ I do not include in this list the item found in *toṅ toṅ toṅ eṇṇum parai* (*Nālaṭi* 25.4).

⁶⁴ Doubtful item: See *Maṇimēkalai* 16.67.

Work	<i>X-eṇal</i> -Sample (conservative part)	<i>X-eṇal</i> -Sample (innovative part)	Density
<i>Tēvāram</i> (TEV)	<i>kalleṇal, taṇṇeṇal, tuṇṇeṇal,</i>	<i>cikkeṇal</i> (S34), <i>kiṇiṇeṇal</i> (S36), <i>kiṇṇeṇal</i> (S37), <i>vaṇṇeṇal</i> (S38), <i>tiṇṇeṇal</i> (S39), <i>veṇṇeṇal</i> (S40), <i>miṇṇeṇal</i> (S41), <i>mūceṇal</i> (S42), <i>nerukkeṇal</i> (S43), <i>mummeṇal</i> (S44), <i>ummeṇal</i> (S45), <i>momme- ṇal</i> (S46)	NC
<i>Tivviya Pirapantam</i> and commentaries (TIV) ⁶⁶		<i>metteṇal</i> (S25), <i>puṇṇeṇal</i> (S29), <i>tiṇṇeṇavu</i> (S39), <i>veṇṇeṇal</i> (S40), <i>cilleṇal</i> (S), <i>cummeṇal</i> (S), <i>kolleṇal</i> (S), <i>civiṇṇeṇal</i> (S), <i>kaṇṇakaṇṇeṇal</i> (R), <i>neṇuneṇal</i> (R3), <i>moṇumoṇeṇal</i> (R), <i>mocu- moceneṇal</i> (R), <i>coṇṇucceṇal</i> (R), <i>kārukāreṇal</i> (R), <i>kīcukiceṇal</i> (R), <i>paraṇṇaparaṇṇeṇal</i> (R), <i>mocuku- mocuṇeṇal</i> (R), <i>kaṇṇārkaṇṇeṇal</i> (R), <i>cīṇṇupāreṇal</i> (E), <i>calārpilā- reṇal</i> (E)	
<i>Tiruvācakam</i> (VĀC)	<i>tuṇṇeṇal</i>	<i>mukēreṇal</i> (*T12=S), [<i>naṇu- muruttal</i>] ⁶⁷ (*E)	
<i>Īṭu</i> (ĪṬU)		<i>metteṇal</i> (S25), <i>civileṇal</i> (S), <i>cilukucilukeṇal</i> (R), <i>pacukupacu- keṇal</i> (R), <i>paṇṇapaṇṇeṇal</i> (R), <i>naṇukumuṇṇeṇal</i> (E)	

Chart 4b: Distribution of *X-eṇal* expressions in Later Classical Tamil (LCT)

It is of course a complex task to analyse this data. One possible rough distinction between these LCT texts could be tentatively established between those that are conservative in their vocabulary, not containing many new items, and those that are innovative, probably reflecting more closely the spoken language of their period. For instance *Cilappatikāram* could be said to be conservative, whereas *Tēvāram* could be said to be innovative, because although it contains a sizeable number of *X-eṇal* expressions, a majority of them are “new” if we compare them with the usage of ECT. A special case would be *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*, which can be said to be both conservative and innovative, on the basis of this criterion. One should also remark that it is of course not enough to simply give the list of *X-eṇal* expressions. The number of occurrences should also be given, in order to see which items were growing, so to speak, out of

⁶⁵ While *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* contains many new items, it still does not seem to contain R-type items.

⁶⁶ The data presented on this line is not, like the data given for *Tēvāram*, based on an exhaustive examination of the text. I have only listed those *X-eṇal* items for which the TL had mentioned the *Tivviya Pirapantam* and its commentaries as an authority. Still, it appeared to me interesting to make this partial (and not fully verified) data available.

⁶⁷ Although this form does not belong to the set of *X-eṇal* expressions, it belongs to a companion set, to which I have alluded several times, where the X component directly takes verbal suffixes.

(linguistic) fashion.⁶⁸ Another parameter is of course the inflectional freedom which was already alluded to at the end of the last section. This is only a preliminary survey. This being done, a new list of items can be compiled, extending our original list of 22 items which was based only on *Ak*, *Pu*, *Na* and *Ku*.

<i>X-ənal</i>	Works
S24: <i>nalleṇal</i>	AI (doubtful)
S25: <i>metteṇal</i>	PP
S26: <i>kommeṇal</i>	PAR, CIV
S27: <i>ammeṇal</i>	KAL, CIV
S28: <i>taiyeṇal</i>	KAL
S29: <i>purkeṇal</i>	TK, CIV
S30: <i>polleṇal</i>	TK, CIV
S31: <i>kaṭukkeṇal</i>	NAL
S32: <i>ceṅveṇal</i>	CIL
S33: <i>iḷiṇeṇal</i>	MAN, CIV
S34: <i>cikkeṇal</i>	MAN, TEV
S35: <i>pommeṇal</i>	CIV
S36: <i>kiṇiṇeṇal</i>	CIV, TEV
S37: <i>kiṇṇeṇal</i>	TEV
S38: <i>vaṛkeṇal</i>	TEV
S39: <i>tiṇṇeṇal</i>	TEV
S40: <i>veṭṭeṇal</i>	TEV
S41: <i>miṇṇeṇal</i>	TEV
S42: <i>mūceṇal</i>	TEV
S43: <i>nerukkeṇal</i>	TEV
S44: <i>mummeṇal</i>	TEV
S45: <i>ummeṇal</i>	TEV
S46: <i>mommeṇal</i>	TEV

Chart 5: Additional (or “new”) *X-ənal* expressions

HLD: The *Tivākaram* and its *aṇukaraṇa-v-ōcai-s*

In the preceding sections, I have compiled several lists of *X-ənal* expressions, and tried to set up criteria for them. I am of course not the first to do so. The first attempt in these matters for Tamil seems to have been that of the traditional Lexicographers who composed non-alphabetical lexicons, of the *kośa*-type, as a result of the influence of Sanskrit.⁶⁹ The most ancient one to be preserved is the *Tivākaram* (ca. 7th-8th century) and one of its verses enumerates 8 items, namely

immeṇal (T1 = S7), *kalleṇal* (T2 = S1), *iḷumeṇal* (T3 = S8), *valleṇal* (T4 = S15),
pommeṇal (T5 = S35), *olleṇal* (T6 = S9), *polleṇal* (T7 = S30) & *ṇelleṇal* (T8)

and characterises them as being *aṇukaraṇa-v-ōcai* “imitative sounds”.

⁶⁸ In terms of distribution, the text which appears closest to the corpus of chart 3 is the *Pattuppāṭṭu*. We have already seen that its “density” was also very similar. This points to most of the “10 Songs” belonging to the same stratum as *Ak*, *Pu*, *Na* and *Ku*. I did not try to examine the songs individually.

⁶⁹ For details, see James[2000: 57-88].

A first remark is that five of these items (T1, T2, T3, T4 & T6) are to be seen in Chart 3. Of the remaining three, two more (T5 & T7) are found in Chart 5,⁷⁰ but for the last one (T8) no attestation could be found by me in any text.

Sanskrit roots of *Tivākaram* terminology.

Regarding the technical term *anukaraṇa-v-ōcai* which is found in the *Tivākaram*, it appears that its first part was borrowed from Sanskrit and apparently goes back to the pāṇinian grammatical tradition: Pāṇini himself, the ancient Sanskrit grammarian, when referring to some items in the Sanskrit language, uses once the term *anukaraṇa* “imitative” and twice the expression *avyaktānukaraṇa* “imitation of an inarticulate sound”.⁷¹ According to some commentators and to some of the modern explanatory translators of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, the lexical items which are referred to by the following expressions, could possibly be those listed in Chart 2, below, some of them being based on the particle *iti*. It is to be noted, in that respect, that the peculiarities of the use of the quotative verb (or of the quotative particles) in the Dravidian languages have been, in the XXth century, compared by Emeneau with those of the particle *iti* in Sanskrit. If the items gathered in Chart 2 are indeed what Pāṇini had in mind when he used *anukaraṇa* and *avyaktānukaraṇa*, Emeneau, in his observations on the parallelism between Indo-Aryan and Dravidian, can thus be seen as walking in the footsteps of the ancient Tamil lexicographer who composed *Tivākaram*.⁷²

Items with marker <i>iti</i>	Example quoted (or explanation given)	Pāṇini <i>sūtra</i>
<i>khaṭad iti</i>	<i>khaṭad iti kṛtvā</i> vs. <i>khaṭatkṛtya</i>	I.4.62 (Renou[1966])
<i>ghaṭad iti</i>		VI.1.98 (ibid.)
<i>paṭ iti</i>	<i>paṭ iti karoti</i>	V.4.57 (ibid.)
<i>paṭad iti</i>	(becomes <i>paṭ iti</i>)	VI.1.98 (ibid.)
<i>paṭatpaṭad iti</i>		VI.1.99 (ibid.)
<i>paṭatpaṭeti</i>	(from. <i>paṭatpaṭat + iti</i>)	VI.1.99 (ibid.)
<i>śrad iti</i>		VI.1.98 (ibid.)

Chart 6a: X-*iti* expressions⁷³ in *Aṣṭādhyāyī* commentaries

⁷⁰ T7 (*poḷḷeṇal*) is first found in *Kuṛaḷ* 487: *poḷḷeṇa āṅkē puṛam vēṛār* “(The wise) will not immediately and hastily show their anger” (Translation kō.va.ce.). T5 (*pommeṇal*) seems to be first attested in *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* (333 & 1930) and in *Tirukkōvaiyār* (395). It is noteworthy that 5 of the 8 items are found in *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*.

⁷¹ *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.4.62, 5.4.57 & 6.1.98. The English translation is by Ś.Ch. Vasu.

⁷² See Emeneau [1980: 170-171]: “Both Dr. and IA show a great proliferation of onomatopoeics. Their systems are remarkably parallel, being characterized by: stems that occur in both non-reduplicated and reduplicated forms; reduplication both identical and with some change of the basic form, [...]; the use of Skt. *iti*, MIA *ti*, etc., following an onomatopoeic (from Vedic on, but not Rgvedic), parallel to the Dr. use of the quotative verb **en-*/**in-*/**an-*. [...] It is highly doubtful whether the IA system can be traced back to IE, either as a system or in any of its details [...]”.

⁷³ To that list of expressions can perhaps be added the item *bāl iti* “with a splash” mentioned in Whitney[1924: §1102c] and those X-*iti* expressions that are studied in Hahn’s 1977 paper, “*Iti* als Adverbialbilder”. Hahn mentions the following onomatopoeic items: *jhaṭ iti*, *dhag iti*, *cham iti*, *caṭaccaṭaditi*, *chamacchamaditi*, etc. I wish to thank Nalini Balbir for kindly drawing my attention to this paper. I do not know whether dictionaries or lists of such expressions in Sanskrit or Middle Indo-Aryan have been compiled, as is the case for Marathi, Telugu and Tamil.

Items with marker <i>ḌāC</i>	Example quoted (or explanation given)	Pāṇini <i>sūtra</i>
<i>paṭapaṭā</i>	<i>paṭapaṭā karoti</i>	V.4.57 (ibid.)
<i>paṭapaṭā</i>		VI.1.100 (with ref. to VIII.1.12, vt.)
<i>kharaṭakharaṭā</i>	<i>kharaṭakharaṭā karoti</i>	V.4.57 (ibid.)

Chart 6b: Other expressions (alternating with *X-iti* expressions)

R-Type (and suffixed S-Type) expressions in traditional lexicons

S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, the editor of *TL*, remarks in his introduction (*TL*, Vol. 1, p. xxvi-xxvii), commenting upon the *Tivākaram*, that:

The first edition of this work (1835 A.D.) by Tāṇḍavarāya Mudaliar covers the first ten sections only and contains many sutras, admittedly composed afresh and added by him. Excluding these additions, about 9500 words are dealt with. The later editions fail to distinguish between the original sutras and these additions. There are indications showing that a like process of addition had gone on even prior to the first edition. The original could have been only a work of moderate size, though sufficiently comprehensive for the time.

As a matter of fact, it so happens that the verse (or *sūtra*) containing the 8 items (T1 to T8) which are characterized as *aṅṅukaraṇa-v-ōcai*, seems to belong to the first stratum of the *Tivākaram*, but that it is followed in the 1835 edition by 2 extraneous *sūtras* (which are explicitly discarded in the 1990-1993 critical edition). The first of these *sūtras* contains 6 items, also called *aṅṅukaraṇa-v-ōcai*, 5 of which are remarkable for the suffix (-*ēl* or -*ēr*) which they contain:

kommeṅal (T9=S26), *viṭṭeṅal* (T10), *terēṅal* (T11), *mukēreṅal* (T12),⁷⁴ *ammeṅal* (T13), *carēṅal* (T14).

The second extraneous *sūtra* contains 10 items, characterized as being *upayaṅōcai* in *peyar*:

paṭapaṭeṅal (T15), *kaḷakaḷeṅal* (T16), *paṭapaṭeṅal* (T17), *koḷakoḷeṅal* (T18), *moṭumoṭeṅal* (T19), *tiṭutiṭeṅal* (T20), *mokamokeṅal* (T21), *kalakaleṅal* (T22), *neṭaneṅal* (T23), *kaṭakaṭeṅal* (T24)

We meet here, for the second time, with Sanskrit terminology, because *upaya* is the tamilized form of *ubhaya*-. The *upayaṅōcai* are also called *iraṭṭaiḱ kiḷavi* in the *Tolkāppiyam* —they are those items which we assigned to the R-Type.⁷⁵

Whatever be the source from which items T9 to T24 have been taken from,⁷⁶ we can observe that several of these items are already familiar to us, because we have (see chart 5):

⁷⁴ This item is attested in *Tiruvācakam* (7-11): *moyyār taṭam poykai pukku, mukēreṅṅak kaiyār kuṭaintu kuṭaintu un kaḷal pāṭi* “entering the broad, frequented tank with joyful cries, and hands outstretched, we plunge and plunge, and sing Thy foot” (Pope[1900, p.109]). Pope’s glossary, more explicitly, explains *mukēreṅal* as being “an imitative word ‘with a splash’ ”.

⁷⁵ We have also noted that they do not always need an *eṅal* component.

(13) *kommeṇal* (T9) = S26 (see chart 5),

(14) *ammeṇal* (T13) = S27 (id.),

(15) *kalakaleṇal* (T22) = R2 (see chart 1)

Moreover, even though an item like T23 (*neṭaneṭeṇal*) is not found in the *Tēvāram*,⁷⁷ we find there some close equivalent (if we are to believe TL when he gives two items as semantically equivalent), though in a very peculiar condition because it occurs without its *eṇal* component, in the following phrase:

(16) *neṭuneṭu irru viḷā* “[My mind was meditating on the feet whose toe was fixed so that the heads and shoulders] fell down crackling and splitting with a sound ‘*neṭuneṭu*’”⁷⁸

Emancipation of X-*eṇal* expressions from the *eṇal* component

The phenomenon just mentioned is not an isolated occurrence. It happens several times with R-type expressions. Other examples are for instance:

(17) *neṟuneru* (*Tēvāram* 6.18.11),⁷⁹

(18) *calacala* (*Tēvāram* 1.22.1, 1.22.3, 2.91.3)

(19) *kaṟakaṟa* (*Tēvāram* 7.54.5)

It has been noted that in modern Tamil, the emancipation of the R-type from the presence of an *eṇal* component is frequent.⁸⁰ It is however not compulsory.

The emancipation from the *eṇal* component in Later Classical Tamil is not reserved to the R-Type. We can mention at least one case where it occurs with a S-Type element, characterized by a suffix. The item T14 (*carḷeṇal*) which is listed in an extraneous *sūtra* of *Tivākaram* can be seen, without the *eṇal* component, here:

(20) *manti pāyac carḷac corintum murintu ukka pū* “flowers which shed bending, and pouring, when the female monkeys suddenly leap” (*Tēvāram* 2.114.3, translation VMS)

We should finally add that in the case of S-type elements, the disappearance of the *eṇal* component transforms them in some sense into simple adjectives.⁸¹ For instance, after the classical period, the item *nalleṇal* (=S5) seems to disappear: what we find is a simplified form, in formulas like *nallirul* (14 occ. in *Tēv.*), instead of the former formulas: *nalleṇ kaṅkul* (7 occ. in *Ku. + Na. + Ak.*), *nalleṇ yāmattu* (10 occ. in *Ku. + Na. + Ak.*).

⁷⁶ The likely motivation for adding new words is the influence of more recently compiled lexicons, as for instance the *Cūṭāmaṇi Nikanṭu* (1520 AD).

⁷⁷ T23 is found, however in *Tēmpāvaṇi* 35.74.2.

⁷⁸ *Tēvāram* 4.14.11. Translation VMS.

⁷⁹ For an instance of the full form (with its *eṇal* component), see the sentence: *neruneruvenṟu muriyumpatiyākavum* mentioned under the entry *nerunereṇal* in the *Vaiṇava Uraṇaṭai Varalāṟru Muṟai Tamil Pērakarāṭi*, Vol. 2, p. 655, 2001.

⁸⁰ This is why the study for Modern Tamil by Malten[1989], *Reduplizierte Verbstämme im Tamil*, is devoted to the stems themselves, i.e. the X element in the R-type of X-*eṇal* expressions.

⁸¹ But conversely, some items that were simple adjectives in ECT, like *tiṇ* (in *tiṇ tēr* “strong chariot”), start to be used with an *eṇal* component in *Tēvāram* (see S39 in chart 1). There is a reorganization of paradigms at that period.

The rise of suffixes

Apart from the increasing frequency of R-Type *X-ənal* expressions, and the concomitant emancipation from the *ənal* component, another important feature in the history of *X-ənal* expressions is the rising importance of suffixes. We have already given in Chart 2 a brief outline. We are now in a position, drawing from the texts explored so far, to mention a few suffixes. The first one to be mentioned could be the one just seen in T14 (*carēlēnal*), which possesses two variants (*ēl* and *ēr*) in LCT and which is found in 4 forms in Modern Tamil (*-ēr/-ēl/-ār/-īr*). It is to be noted that the suffix was already present in ECT, in an item like S16 (*ñerēreṇal*). The mention of 4 items belonging to this group in the extraneous *Tivākaram* sūtra is well in accordance with the rising visibility of this suffix. Other suffixes with rising importance are *-iṇ*, *-um*, *-ku*, as one can see when comparing charts 1, 2b, 3a, 4a & 4b with the following chart 7⁸²

	S (simple)	R (redup.)	E (echo)	Total
no suffix	120 items	231 items	41 items	392
-um suffix	9	2	1	12
-ēr/-ēl/-ār/-īr	44	6	1	61
-iṇ	5	4	1	10
-kku/-ku	45	39	10	94
-ā	3	6	12	21
Other suffixes	9	13	11	33
Total	235	301	77	613

Chart 7: Distribution of *X-ənal* expressions in the Tamil lexicon

The rise of the E-type

So far, the only E-type *X-ənal* expression which I have pointed out is one found in *Tēvāram* (E1= *tiṭukumoṭṭeṇal*), and it is a doubtful one because it does not exactly fit into the pattern of those E-type expressions which I mentioned for contemporary Tamil. However, if we examine other works, we are able to find the following items, already used in ancient texts:⁸³

(21) *calārpilāreṇal* (*Tiv. periyāḷ. 1.7.1*)

(22) *cīrupāreṇal* (*Tiv. tiruppā.*)

(23) *naṟukumurukeṇal* (*iṭu, 6, 9, 5*)

(24) *calukkumolukkeṇal* (*kaliñ.*)

(25) *naṟumūruttal* (*Tiruvācakam,*)⁸⁴

These examples are of course better than the one found in the *Tēvāram* (E1 in Chart 1). They testify that this phonologically peculiar class of words is ancient.⁸⁵

⁸² Detailed lists of each sub-types are given in Chevillard[2002].

⁸³ These are in fact already mentioned in Chart 4b.

⁸⁴ This last item does not fit, of course, into the *X-ənal* template. It is however a testimony for the echo-reduplication —that is the base of the E-type— being active in this text.

HGD: The grammarians' analysis: a semantic triad

Compared with the lexicographers' task, which may simply have been a patient and cumulative labour once the category (or the label) had been given its place under the sun, the grammarians' task was a more arduous one. Their interaction with the *X-ənal* expressions seems in some sense to have been indirect, because we find in the T several statements concerning either the X or the *ənal* component but the appearance of *X-ənal* expressions as wholes is found only in examples given by the commentators, as Ḫampūraṇar and his successors. Therefore, we can never be sure that those items are really what the author of T had in mind. However, we are not in a position to simply dismiss T's commentaries as irrelevant, and I shall proceed to list the *X-ənal* expressions that are adduced by them, before examining the corresponding T *sūtras*.

X-ənal	Context	Location
S3: <i>taṇṇənal</i>	<i>nīr taṇṇəṇṇratu</i>	TC416i ⁸⁶
S9: <i>ollenənal</i>	<i>ollenə olittatu</i> (implicitly contrasted with <i>ollolittatu</i> , cf. S51)	{TC253i, TC258c}; TC438c
	<i>ollenṇru olikkum</i>	TC254i
	<i>ollenṇru olikkum oli puṇal ūraṅku</i> (<i>Aintiṇai Aimpatu</i> 28)	TC259c
	<i>ollenə vīntatu</i>	TC440c
S11: <i>katumeṇal</i>	<i>poḷḷəṇa pommeṇa katumeṇa ivai viraiṇu uṇarttiṇṇru</i>	TC298n
S15: <i>vallenənal</i>	<i>nilam vallenṇratu</i>	TC416i
S19: <i>veḷḷənal</i>	<i>veḷḷəṇa viḷarttatu</i>	{TC253i, TC258c}
	<i>veḷḷəṇṇru viḷarttatu</i>	TC254i
	<i>veḷḷəṇa veḷuttatu</i>	TC440c
S20: <i>tuṇṇənal</i>	<i>tuṇṇəṇat tuḷittatu</i>	TC253i; TC438c
	<i>tuṇṇəṇṇru tuḷittatu</i>	TC254i
	<i>tuṇṇəṇat tuḷaṅkiṇṇāṇ]</i>	TC440c
S22: <i>kāreṇal</i>	<i>kāreṇak karuttatu</i> (contrasted with <i>kārkaruttatu</i> , cf. S51)	TC438c
S26: <i>kommeṇal</i>	<i>kommeṇa eṇpatu perukkam eṇnum kuṇippu uṇarttiṇṇru</i>	TC298n
S30: <i>poḷḷəṇal</i>	Same context as S11	
S32: <i>ceṇveṇal</i>	<i>mutanilaiyāvatu kariyaṇ ceyyaṇ karumai cemmai eṇpaṇavaṇṇiṇṇkellām mutanilaiyāy collāy niram-pātu karu ceṇveṇaṇ paṇṇu māttiram niṇpatām</i>	TC416c
S35: <i>pommeṇal</i>	[cf. S11]	

Chart 8a: *X-ənal* expressions inside T's commentaries (Classical items)

⁸⁵ A full study would be, however, highly desirable for these items. *TL* often mentions them as 2nd choice variants to R-type elements and, less often, as 1st choice variants.

⁸⁶ The first 2 letters indicate the book inside T (TC = Book on Words; TE = Book on Letters); the digits indicate the *sūtra* number (in this commentary) and the final letter the commentator's initial: i=Ḫampūraṇar, c=Cēṇāvaraiyar, n=Naccinārkkkiṇṇiyar.

X- <i>eṇal</i>	Example	Commentary
S47: <i>karuvenal</i>	Same context as S11	
S48: <i>kakṛeṇal</i>	<i>kakṛeṇratu</i>	TE40i
	<i>kakṛeṇṇun kallatarattam</i>	TE40n
S49: <i>paccenāl</i>	<i>ilai paccenratu</i>	TC416i
	<i>paccenru pacuttatu</i>	TC259c
S50: <i>cukṛeṇal</i>	<i>cukṛeṇratu</i>	TE40i
	<i>cukṛeṇṇun taṇṭōṭṭup penṇai</i> (approx. Tiruvilai. [57x48x2])	TE40n
S51: <i>viṇṇeṇal</i>	<i>viṇṇeṇa vicaittatu</i> (contrasted with <i>viṇviṇai-ttatu</i>) ⁸⁷	TE482i, TC253i
	<i>viṇṇeṇru vicaittatu</i>	TC253i, TC259c
	<i>viṇṇeṇa viṇaittatu</i> ⁸⁸	TC440c
	<i>viṇṇeṇa viṇkiṇru</i>	TC440c

Chart 8b: *X-eṇal* expressions inside T's commentaries (New items)

The triad and the rise of "quality"

There are of course many comments to be made on these data and on the way they are related to the *T sūtras* for which they are given as illustrations. However, before making any observation, it seems necessary first to explain the way these expressions are analysed by grammarians. The main fact seems to be that the most "tangible" (or ascertainable) element inside the *X-eṇal* expressions seemed to be for them the *eṇal* component, most often quoted in one of two inflected forms, *eṇa* and *eṇru*, considered however as "particles" (*iṭaic col*). As far as the X component is concerned, it is sometimes taken as a topic for discussion but as being part of an unanalysable whole.⁸⁹ Thus, paradoxically, classifications of the different semantic value-types of the X component can be found in fact, however with a few exceptions, inside the list of possible values of the particles *eṇa* and *eṇru*. And it is inside the commentaries to *sūtras* dealing with *eṇa* and *eṇru* that we find many of the examples that are mentioned in chart 8. These *sūtras* enumerate six different values for these particles, and among these six, three are illustrated by examples containing *X-eṇal* expressions, these three being characterized by the words *icai* "sound", *kuṛippu* "notion, idea, intent" and *paṇṇu* "quality".⁹⁰ It has also to be noted that these

⁸⁷ The wider context is: *viṇviṇaittatu, kārkaruttatu, ollolittatu ivai kuṛaiccorṇiḷavi āyinaimaiyīṇ muṭṭikkap-paṭṭāvāyīṇa; viṇṇeṇa vicaittatu eṇa iṭaiccollōṭu kūṭiyavalip puṇarkkappaṭum*. The three "bound forms" which are referred to here are VIN, KĀR et OL. In this passage, the reader can be tempted to correct *viṇviṇaittatu* into *viṇvicaittatu*, but the TL has an entry *viṇviṇaittal* "to throb, as the eye; kaṇ mutaliyāṇa terittal". There does not seem to exist a simple *viṇaittal* verb.

⁸⁸ The editions I consulted had *vicaittatu*, but I add this possible reading following a remark by T. V. Gopal Iyer who elaborates on a remark by Ganesh Aiyar in his *Cēṇāvaraiyam* edition. The reasoning is based on the homogeneous character of the expressions under examination in this passage.

⁸⁹ The unanalysable character does not seem to be based on philosophical considerations. It is rather a simple statement that no provision is made in this grammar for explaining the internal sandhi.

⁹⁰ There is something intriguing concerning the place of *paṇṇu* along with *kuṛippu* and *icai*. The X component which we have in the two latter cases seems to be a bound form that could not be used

three terms, which I shall designate globally as the semantic “Triad”, are also found together, without additional terms in other contexts where they seem to be possible characterizations of the X component.

Conclusion

I had announced I would postpone the terminological discussion which touches on the essence of *X-ənal* expressions, *i.e.* what makes them to be what they are, until after completing (at least partially) the census that has taken the better part of this essay. Any such discussion has to be based on facts. I have tried, until now, to remain as close as possible to the morphological ground, but one may try to find out whether these items have also something in common semantically, beyond their singularities. Before the advent of “ideophone”,⁹¹ many other terms have been used although the different authors do not always agree on what they mean by them.⁹² In the western grammatical tradition, the technical term *onomatopoeia* has for a long time been in use to refer to the process of imitative word formation, although this was not its original meaning in Greek.⁹³ Other vocabulary elements are “onomatopoeic words”, “expressives”, “iconicity”, etc., to which we should add *anukaraṇa* (“imitative”) which we found in the Sanskrit tradition and the triad (*icai, kurippu, paṇṇu*) which our Tamil grammarians have used. The perspective under which some of these discussions have taken place is, for instance, summarized by M.L. Apte [1968: 5], who invokes E. Sapir [1929] but does not discuss Pāṇini,⁹⁴ before embarking himself on an exploration of Marathi:

without the *ənal* component. This last one appears as a kind of tool that allows items not well defined to be used as verbs, adverbs or adjectives. However, those items which the grammarians give as examples for *paṇṇu* often possess free variants. I have mentioned in footnote 81 that there is also some movement into the S-type, and that it seems to concern adjectival roots. This would require further studies on a wider base, but one can say (1) that the class of *X-ənal* expressions is not totally homogeneous and (2) that it can lose elements, but also gain new members by the power of its attractive morphology.

⁹¹ According to Voeltz & Killian-Hatz [2001: 1], the term was coined in 1935 by Doke “attempting to systematize and prescribe grammatical terminology for Bantu linguistics”.

⁹² See for instance Anvita Abbi [1992: 15] who says: “The best solution would be to treat all these forms by their various names under the term EXPRESSIVES. Expressives, then, can be further studied under (1) Onomatopoeias, (2) Sound symbolism, (3) Ideophones and (4) Imitatives.”. But in the available linguistic literature, the terminological distinctions do not seem to be clear-cut, and several of the terms used appear to be loose equivalents of each other.

⁹³ J. Lallot [1998: 158], while commenting on chapter 12 of the *Technè*, observes that: “Chez Aristote, *Poét.* 1457b 33, le nom ‘forgé’, *pepoiēmēnon* [...] est celui qui est réputé avoir été fait, inventé de toutes pièces par le poète [...] mais les exemples que donne Aristote ne suggèrent nullement qu’il s’agisse de créations ‘onomatopéiques’ [...] Ici, en revanche, *l’ónoma pepoiēmēnon* est le produit de l’activité d’*onomatopoiía*, au sens restreint de création verbale imitative que ce mot a pris, semble-t-il, au seuil de notre ère (Strabon)”.

⁹⁴ Information on the uses of *anukaraṇa* is not easy to obtain. Abhyankar[1961], after pointing to Pāṇini and its commentaries, briefly mentions that the term is used in Nirukta IX.12 to characterize the word *duṇḍubhi* (a drum), and that it is also used in a *paribhāṣā: prakṛtivād anukaraṇam bhavati* “an imitative name is like its original”. Much more discussion and depth of field is found in Renou[1957: 24-25] (in French). For the *paribhāṣā*, see also Wujastyk[1993: 256]. Lastly, after writing this paper, I came to realize that Deshpande[1992] deals extensively with the treatment of *anukaraṇa* in the work of Sanskrit grammarians from a philosophical point of view.

Although Sapir has no general discussion on the usefulness of the terms ‘echo words’ or ‘onomatopoeic words’ he has described in detail in his article ‘A study in phonetic symbolism’ [⁹⁵] the experiment he carried out to find how far the ‘expressive['] symbolism existed in any language apart from the ‘referential’ symbolism which is the very essence of linguistic form. The results of his experiments according to him go far to support the theory that such an ‘expressive’ symbolism does exist (Apte [1968: 5])

Sapir himself had said:

The symbolism of language is, or may be, twofold. By far the greater portion of its recognized content and structure is symbolic in a purely referential sense; in other words, the meaningful combinations of vowels and consonants derive their functional significance from the arbitrary associations between them and their meanings established by various societies in the course of an uncontrollably long period of historical development. [...] This completely dissociated type of symbolism is of course familiar, it is the very essence of linguistic form. But there are other types of linguistic expression that suggest a more fundamental, a psychologically primary, sort of symbolism. [...] We may call this type of symbolism ‘expressive’ as contrasted with the merely ‘referential’ symbolism which was first spoken of. (E. Sapir[1929]⁹⁶)

However, if we try to make a working definition starting from the intuition which is expressed here and try to apply it to the description of a specific language, we may run into several difficulties.

- If the language is a living language, the differing perceptions of native speakers and of non-native speakers and the echo that will arise among linguists⁹⁷ because of these differing perceptions can be very puzzling
- If the language is a dead language, there will be puzzling traces of differing perceptions.⁹⁸

This article will not be able to provide an answer to a general question which would be: “What is an ideophone?” I could only try to answer the more restricted one: “What has been in the course of time, the behaviour of what I perceive as a morphologically coherent group of items, with this additional *éclairage* that they seem to behave in ways which resemble those of ‘similar’ groups of items in other languages?” It is quite possible that further studies will bring me closer to less ineffable explanations on what “expressive symbolism” is. For the time being, I have to go on reading texts and trying to recreate artificially (mine is *ceyarkai*) for non-native recipients what spontaneous

⁹⁵ At this point, Apte gives the reference for Sapir[1929] reprinted in Mandelbaum[1958: 61-72].

⁹⁶ Reproduced here from Mandelbaum[(¹1949) 1963: 61 (fourth reprint)].

⁹⁷ See for instance several of the articles in the collective volume, *Ideophones*, edited by Voeltz & Kilian-Hatz [2001]. For remarks on the fact that some have “overemphasized” the “exoticism” of ideophones, and that “they are not ‘outrè-système’”, see Newman, pp. 251-258, in the same volume. For remarks by someone who seems to think that expressives are under-studied and tend to be ignored by many linguists, see Diffloth [2001].

⁹⁸ A telling sign that there is a problem with our understanding of a lexical item is found when we have almost as many meanings proposed by dictionaries as we have occurrences. This is the case for instance with *tavvenal* (= S18). Naccinārkkiniyar’s explanation of *tavvenal* in *Neṭu*. 185, which has been referred to in fn. 59, does not coincide with Parimēlaḷakar’s explanation of *tavvenal* in *Kuraḷ* 1144. Modern authors writing commentaries for ECT works where this item also occurs are of course embarrassed when the context does not help them to choose between these two possibilities.

perception I suppose exists for native recipients (theirs is *iyarkai*). Among the items which I regret not to have had the time to present in this essay are all the *X-eṇal* musical elements,⁹⁹ which are found frequently, especially in the *Tēvāram*,¹⁰⁰ and which might have an even more efficient claim for real iconicity. Therefore, as a compensation for their absence, I shall give the last word to one of them:

tantattintattaṭameṇṇa aruvit tiral pāyntu pōy...

“the collection of streams flowing with the sound *tantattintattaṭam ...*”¹⁰¹

Appendix: alphabetical list of the *X-eṇal* expressions discussed¹⁰²

<i>ammeṇal</i> (S27)	<i>kiṇṇeṇal</i> (S37)	<i>tavveṇal</i> (S18)	<i>purkeṇal</i> (S29)
<i>āvāveṇal</i> (R5)	<i>kīcukiceṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>tiṭukumoṭṭeṇal</i> (E1)	<i>paiyeṇal</i> (S4)
<i>immeṇal</i> (S7)	<i>kuṟukuruttal</i> (TC48c)	<i>tiṇṇeṇal/tiṇṇeṇavu</i> (S39)	<i>pommeṇal</i> (S35)
<i>iḷiṇeṇal</i> (S33)	<i>kūkūveṇal</i> (R4)	<i>tuṭkeṇal</i> (S21)	<i>poḷḷeṇal</i> (S30)
<i>iḷumeṇal</i> (S8)	<i>kommeṇal</i> (S26)	<i>tuṭumeṇal</i> (S17)	<i>miṇṇeṇal</i> (S41)
<i>ummeṇal</i> (S45)	<i>koḷḷeṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>tunṇeṇal</i> (S20)	<i>mukēreṇal</i> (T12)
<i>oyyeṇa</i> (S6)	<i>koṟukoṟuttal</i> (TC48c)	<i>tunukkuttunukkeṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>mummeṇal</i> (S44)
<i>olḷeṇal</i> (S9)	<i>carēḷeṇal</i> (T14)	<i>terēḷeṇal</i> (T11)	<i>mūceṇal</i> (S42)
<i>aiyeṇal</i> (S10)	<i>calārpilāreṇal</i> (E)	<i>terreṇavu</i> (S14)	<i>mocukumocukeṇal</i> (TIV)
<i>kaṟeṇal</i> (S48)	<i>calukkumolukkeṇal</i> (E)	<i>taiyeṇal</i> (S28)	<i>mocumoceneṇal</i> (TIV)
<i>kaṭukkeṇal</i> (S31)	<i>cikkeṇal</i> (S34)	<i>narukumuruṇeṇal</i> (E) (ĪṬU)	<i>moṭumoṭuttal</i> (TC48c)
<i>kaṇakaṇaveṇal</i> (R1)	<i>cilleṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>narumuruttal</i> (*E)	<i>moṟumoṟuttal</i> (TC48c)
<i>kaṇakaṇeṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>cilukucilukeṇal</i> (ĪṬU)	<i>nalleṇal</i> (S24)	<i>metteṇal</i> (S25)
<i>kaṇārkaṇāreṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>civiṭkeṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>nalleṇal</i> (S5)	<i>melleṇal</i> (S13)
<i>katumeṇal</i> (S11)	<i>civileṇal</i> (ĪṬU)	<i>nerukkeṇal</i> (S43)	<i>moṭumoṭeṇal</i> (TIV)
<i>kammeṇal</i> (S12)	<i>cīrupāreṇal</i> (E)	<i>neruneṇal</i> (R3)	<i>mommeṇal</i> (S46)
<i>kalleṇal</i> (S1)	<i>cukreṇal</i> (S50)	<i>pacceṇal</i> (S49)	<i>valleṇal</i> (S15)
<i>kalakaleṇal</i> (R2)	<i>cummeṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>pacukupacukeṇal</i> (ĪṬU)	<i>varkeṇal</i> (S38)
<i>karuveṇal</i> (S47)	<i>curucuruttal</i> (TC48c)	<i>paṭanpaṭaneṇal</i> (ĪṬU)	<i>vāyāvāyeṇal</i> (ĪṬU)
<i>kaṟukaṟuttal</i> (TC48c)	<i>cevveṇal</i> (S32)	<i>parakuparakeṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>viṭeḷeṇal</i> (T10)
<i>kāreṇal</i> (S22)	<i>coṭṭuccoṭṭeṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>pullēṇal</i> (S2)	<i>viṇṇeṇal</i> (S51)
<i>kārukāreṇal</i> (TIV)	<i>ṇēreṇal</i> (S16)		<i>veṭṭeṇal</i> (S40)
<i>kiṭiṇeṇal</i> (S23)	<i>ṇeḷḷeṇal</i> (T8)		<i>veḷḷeṇal</i> (S19)
<i>kiṇiṇeṇal</i> (S36)	<i>taṇṇeṇal</i> (S3)		

⁹⁹ Namely, they are: *tēntāmeṇal* (1-130, 6), *tettēveṇal* (2-72, 5; 4-17, 1), *tēṭṭeṇaveṇal* (4-81, 6), *tēṭṭeṭṭāveṇal* (4-32, 10), *teṇṇeṇal* (1-106, 8; 3-85, 6), *teṇṇāveṇal* (7-101, 1), *teṇṇāṭṭeṇāṭṭeṭṭeṇāveṇal* (7-2, 6). All references are to *Tēvāram*.

¹⁰⁰ Several also occur in *Cīvakacintāmaṇi*. See for instance: *tēntēmeṇal* (292), *tāntāmeṇal* (292 & 680), *tēṭṭāveṇal* (1066).

¹⁰¹ *Tēvāram* (2-5, 4), Translation VMS (=V.M. Subramanya Ayyar).

¹⁰² This chart contains all the *X-eṇal* items that have been mentioned in this essay, to which have been added the 6 items —two for each element of the Triad —mentioned by Cēṇāvaraiyar as illustration for TC48c, *sūtra* which deals with the *iraṭṭaik kiḷavi*, see Chevillard[1996: 114].

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