

# Pronoun incorporation in Old Tamil

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## 1. Introduction

Old Tamil has a group of word forms which formally have a similar structure: they consist of a stem and a pronominal suffix. Actually, there are three different types of word stems to which a person-number-gender suffix, that is a pronominal suffix, is attached directly: defective verb stems, as under (1a), noun stems, as under (1b) and adjective stems, as under (1c):

- (1) a. *uṭai.y-aṇ* (aka 195.10)  
possess-3sm  
“he possesses”
- il-aṇ* (aka 32.12)  
be not-3sm  
“he is not”
- b. *vill-aṇ* (aka 48.12)  
bow-3sm  
“he with the bow/he, who has a bow”
- kai.y-aṇ* (kali 101.40)  
hand-3sm  
“he with the hand/he who has a hand”
- c. *nall-aṇ* (aiṅk 11.3)  
good-3sm  
“the good one (he)”
- per.iy-aṇ* (aka 100.12)  
great-3sm  
“the great one (he)”

Traditional Tamil grammar analyzes these word forms uniformly as one grammatical category, which is called *kuṟippu viṇai* or “non-overt verbs”. These word forms are contrasted with verb forms with overt tense and therefore *kuṟippu viṇai* has to be interpreted as “verbs with non-overt (or implicit) tense”. In the grammatical literature — beginning with the European missionary grammarians — these word forms are called by various labels: “appellative nouns” (Beschi 1822), “appellative verbs” (Caldwell 1856; Subrahmanya Sastri 1934), “personalised nouns” (Bloch 1954), “personal nouns” (Andronov 1969) and again “appellative verbs” (Agesthalingom and Shanmugam 1970; Agesthalingom 1976). From these labels alone we can see that in the grammatical literature the respective word forms are not analyzed uniformly: they are either treated as verbs, as they are analyzed by traditional Tamil grammar, or they are treated as nouns.

In this article, I will first deal with the way traditional Tamil grammar analyzes these word forms. Hereby I will caution against the assumption that the category of *kuṛippu viṇai* has to be understood as a class of verbs in the sense of a syntactic category. Then I will show that these word forms exhibit a different kind of grammatical behaviour and display different grammatical properties, so that word forms consisting of a verb stem + pronominal suffix, as under (1a), should not be grouped together with word forms consisting of a noun stem or adjectival stem + pronominal suffix, as under (1b) and (1c), and therefore all three types of word forms should not be assigned to a common grammatical category. Thirdly, I will propose that word forms consisting of a noun stem or adjective stem + pronominal suffix have the syntactical status of complex noun phrases and are the result of and an instance of the morphological process of pronoun incorporation in Old Tamil. This article is a continuation of my earlier work on this topic, eg. Lehmann (1994:61-68).

## 2. The category *kuṛippu viṇai* in traditional Tamil grammar

In the chapter on verbs (*viṇaiyiyal*) of the *Tolkāppiyam*, *sūtra col.* 195 defines verbs (*viṇai*) as those words which do not take case markers but occur with tense. In the next *sūtra (col.* 196) three tenses are distinguished. *Sūtra col.* 197 then enumerates these three tenses (past, present, future) and makes the following statement: “those three tenses have the property that they occur also with implication/non-overtness (= *kuṛippu*)”. Thus, tense need not always be overtly expressed, but can also occur implicitly or non-overtly. Implication or non-overtness (of tense) is expressed here by the word *kuṛippu*. In the subsequent *sūtra col.* 198 a statement about verb word forms (*viṇai.c col*) is made regarding their occurrence with the categories of human and non-human. In this *sūtra* verbs or verb word forms (*viṇai.c col*) are defined as forms which occur with tense and which occur as *kuṛippu* and as *viṇai*. Here in this particular *sūtra* *kuṛippu* has to be interpreted not simply as “implication” or “non-overtness” but as “(expressions) with implication/non-overtness (of tense)” and likewise *viṇai* — in contrast to *kuṛippu* — as “verbs (with overt/explicit tense)”:

*kuṛipp-in-um viṇai.y-in-um ... tōnri.k*  
*kālam-oṭu varum viṇai.c col ellām ...*

“all verb forms, which occur with tense and occur as  
 verbs (with overt tense) and as (expressions) with non-overt tense ...”

In this *sūtra* the author of the *Tolkāppiyam* states that there are two types of verbs — simply *viṇai* “verbs (with overt tense)” and *kuṛippu* “expressions with implicit or non-overt tense”. Although in most *sūtras* only the word *kuṛippu* is used to denote verbs with non-overt tense, in one *sūtra* — *col.* 72 — in the chapter on case, the statement is given that the case suffix *-ai* occurs both with *viṇai* “verbs (with overt tense)” and with *viṇai.k kuṛippu* “verbs with implicit/non-overt tense”. Later commentators use also the more common term *kuṛippu viṇai*. What are the word forms that the *Tolkāppiyam* refers to as *kuṛippu* or *viṇai.k kuṛippu* “verbs with implicit or non-overt tense”? In two *sūtras* — *col.* 210 and 216 — the *Tolkāppiyam* lists (a) a number of semantic concepts which

are expressed by word forms referred to as *viṇai.k kurippu* and (b) a number of word forms itself. The eight word forms listed under *col. 216* are: *iṇ-ru*, *aṇ-ru*, *uṭai-tu*, *il-a*, *all-a*, *uṭai.y-a*. These word forms can be identified as forms of the verb roots *il* “be”, *al* “be not” and *uṭai* “possess” marked with the third person-singular-neuter suffix *-tu* and the third person-plural-neuter suffix *-a*. All these word forms are forms of defective verbs, which do not occur with tense markers. They correspond to the word forms listed above under (1a). Based on the word forms listed in the *Tolkāppiyam* alone the concept of *viṇai.k kurippu* would refer to what is called defective verbs. However, as mentioned, *sūtra col. 210* lists also a number of semantic concepts expressed by word forms referred to as *viṇai.k kurippu*: possession, location, comparison, quality, negation, non-existence, existence and capability. Unfortunately no examples of word forms other than the ones above listed in *sūtra col. 216* are given. Only the commentators of the medieval period give word forms as instances of the semantic concepts listed in *sūtra col. 210*. Thus the commentator ḷampūraṇar, for instance, gives among others the following examples:

|     |             |                                   |                                   |                                   |
|-----|-------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| (2) | possession: | <i>uṭai.y-aṇ</i><br>possess-3sm   | <i>uṭai.y-aḷ</i><br>possess-3sf   | <i>uṭai.y-ar</i><br>possess-3ep   |
|     | location:   | <i>nila-tt-aṇ</i><br>land-obl-3sm | <i>nila-tt-aḷ</i><br>land-obl-3sf | <i>nila-tt-ar</i><br>land-obl-3ep |
|     | quality:    | <i>kari.y-aṇ</i><br>black-3sm     | <i>kari.y-aḷ</i><br>black-3sf     | <i>kari.y-ar</i><br>black-3ep     |

Here the forms given under possession belong to the type verb stem + pronominal suffix, i.e. defective verb, as under (1a), the forms given under location belong to the type noun stem + pronominal suffix, as under (1b), and the forms given under quality belong to the type adjectival stem + pronominal suffix, as under (1c).

The first clear evidence that all the three types of word forms given under (1) are labelled as *kurippu viṇai* by traditional Tamil grammarians is thus only given by the *Tolkāppiyam* commentators of the medieval period.

Even though all three types of word forms are commonly referred to as *kurippu viṇai* “verbs with the implication/non-overtness of tense”, no grammatical evidence is given by the traditional, medieval grammarians for the categorial status of these word forms as verbs, except for those word forms, which are defective verbs. In the absence of the presentation of any argument to the effect that all three types of word forms have the grammatical properties of verbs, the name *kurippu viṇai* appears to be just a common label for the respective word forms without the implication that all these word forms display also the grammatical properties of verbs. This seems to be admitted by the commentators themselves. Note the interesting remarks by the commentator Teyvaccilaiyār on *sūtra col. 210*. With regard to the word forms *uṭai.y-aṇ* (here as participial noun) “he who possesses”, *opp-aṇ* “he is like” or “he who is like” and *kar.iy-aṇ* “the black one (he)” he says: “*atu peyar-um iṇ-ri*

*viṇai.y-um iṇṇi niṇ-ṛ-at-āy-iṇ-um viṇai.c col pōla niṇ-ṛal-iṇ ... viṇai.k kurippu āyirru.* (“even though it [that is *kar.iy-aṇ*, etc.] occurs neither as noun nor as verb, because it stands as if it is a verb, ... it became a *kurippu viṇai*”).

Here the commentator admits that the name *kurippu viṇai* is only a label for the respective word forms and that this does not imply that they have the categorial status of verbs, based on their grammatical behavior and properties. It has to be remembered that traditional Tamil grammar does not always make a distinction between form and function. Therefore the term *kurippu viṇai* might have been coined because these word forms — among their various and different functions — share one common function with verbs, namely the function of predicates, see also Andronov (1972:173). Thus traditional Tamil grammar does not provide sufficient evidence that these three types of word forms belong to the grammatical word class or syntactic category of verbs.

### 3. Defective verbs vs. pronominalised nouns vs. adjectival nouns

The first major advancement in the analysis of the word forms traditionally called *kurippu viṇai* was Israel (1973:162-174). Israel was the first to notice the diverse grammatical properties of the members of the so-called *kurippu viṇai* word forms. He classifies these word forms into two groups: (a) word forms containing a verb stem, such as the forms in (1a), are analyzed as defective verbs, that is, as verbs with defective morphology since they do not take all verbal suffixes, as imperative, optative and tense suffixes. (b) word forms containing a nominal or an adjectival stem, such as the word forms under (1b) and (1c) are, however, analyzed as pronominalised nouns. There is clearly a difference in the grammatical behaviour of the word forms of both groups. In contrast to the word forms under (1b) and (1c), word forms like *uṭai.y-aṇ* and *il-aṇ* under (1a) display the grammatical properties of verbs and not of nouns. For example, as verbal predicates they select argument NPs and assign case to them. Thus *uṭai* “possess” selects an object NP and assigns accusative case as in Teyvaccilaiyār’s example (on *col.* 210):

- (3) *kulai.y-ai*      *uṭai.y-aṇ*  
 earring-acc      possess-3sm  
 “he possesses an earring”

The word forms under (1b) and (1c), eg. *vill-aṇ* and *nall-aṇ*, do not exhibit such properties, they do not select argument NPs and do not assign case. Word forms as under (1a) like *uṭai.y-aṇ* can be relativized as adjectival participles:

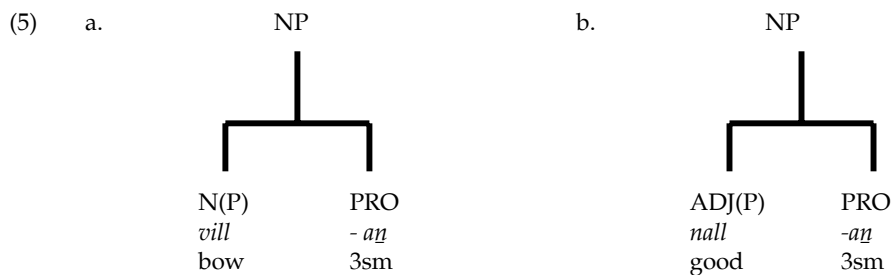
- (4) *toṭi*      *uṭai.y-a*      *tōḷ*      (*pura* 239.1)  
 armring      possess-adj      Arm  
 “the arm which possesses an armring”

Word forms as under (1b) and (1c), like *nāṭ-aṇ* and *nall-aṇ*, on the other hand, cannot be relativized like verbs — contrary to the claim by Agesthalingom (1976) and Balasubramanian (1980). Instead they require, like nominals, the

insertion of the copula adjectival participle *āk-i.y-a* as illustrated under (10) below. In the following I want to present a grammatical analysis of the second group of word forms, which Israel calls pronominalised nouns. The key to this grammatical analysis will be the inclusion of syntax. Hereby I will also show that the word forms under (1b) and (1c), that is, the forms consisting of a noun stem + pronominal suffix and an adjective stem + pronominal suffix have to be distinguished into two different groups too — even though both of them have the categorial status of a noun phrase. Henceforth word forms like *vill-an* will be called personalised nouns and word forms like *nall-an* adjectival nouns. Unfortunately there is no symmetry in terms.

#### 4.1. Surface structure of the personalised nouns and adjectival nouns

The pronominal suffixes of the personalised nouns and the adjectival nouns do not represent an inflectional category, instead they represent pronominal syntactic constituents, that is, pronominal noun phrases, and as such they have referentiality. These pronominal NPs occur as heads and are modified on surface structure by an attributive noun in the case of the personalised nouns and by an attributive adjective in the case of the adjectival nouns. The personalised noun and the adjectival noun is therefore a morphological product, which realizes in one word-form a noun phrase consisting of two syntactic constituents, a nominal or an adjectival attribute and a pronominal head, that is, it is a “phrase word”. The syntactic structure expressed by the personalised nouns and adjectival nouns can be given as in (5):



A personalised noun like *vill-an* is interpreted as a noun phrase which consists of a pronominal head and a noun (or noun phrase) that modifies the head: “he with the bow/he who has a bow”. This has already been noticed by Beschi (1822:46): “Nouns appellative are called *pakupatam*, compound word, because they refer to two objects”. In the form *vill-an* the two objects would be the bow and the person who has a bow: “he with the bow” or “he who has a bow”. Similarly an adjectival noun is interpreted as a noun phrase which consists of a pronominal head and an adjective that modifies the head: “the good one (he), he who is good”. The word forms of the personalised nouns and the adjectival nouns are thus morphological collocations of two syntactic elements. An attributive noun or an attributive adjective and their pronominal head are

realized morphologically by one word form, in which case the pronominal head is added as a bound form, that is, as a pronominal suffix, to the nominal and adjectival modifier respectively.

Before I present arguments for the syntactic structure of the personalised nouns and the adjectival nouns given under (5), I want to deal with the morphological operation which is involved in the formation of these word forms.

#### 4.2. The morphological process of pronoun incorporation.

From the syntactic analysis given above it follows that the morphological process of the formation of these word forms belongs neither to inflection nor to derivation. The suffixation of the pronominal suffixes does not derive a new lexeme but forms syntactically a phrase, that is a noun phrase. Therefore, the pronominal suffixes are no derivational suffixes.

Instead the morphological collocation of two syntactic elements is a particular case of compounding. It is proposed here that in Tamil the formation of the personalised nouns, of the adjectival nouns and also of the participial nouns is effected by the morphological operation of incorporation. In Tamil incorporation can be defined as the collocation or compounding of two adjacent lexemes or syntactic elements, in which case both elements retain their original syntactic function.

Thus, the pronominal head of a noun phrase can be incorporated by its immediately preceding modifier, if that modifier is (i) an attributive noun or nominal, as in the case of personalised nouns, (ii) an adjective, as in the case of the adjectival nouns or (iii) the verbal predicate of a relative clause, as in the case of the participial noun. Thus in (5a) the nominal attribute *vil* "bow" incorporates its pronominal head as pronominal suffix *-aṇ* and in (5b) the adjective *nal* "good" incorporates its pronominal head in the same way as pronominal suffix *-aṇ*. Similarly in the case of a participial noun like *aṛi.y-um-ōṇ* "he, who knows" (pura 137.4), the adjectival participle *aṛi.y-um* of the verb *aṛi* "know" incorporates its pronominal head as pronominal suffix *-ōṇ*. In all three cases, the two elements collocated or compounded to one word form retain their syntactic function as adnominal attribute and as pronominal head.

Now I will return to the syntactic structure of the personalised nouns and the adjectival nouns as given under (5) and present a number of arguments supporting such an analysis.

### 4.3. Syntactic argumentation

According to the proposed analysis, both the personalised nouns and the adjectival nouns have a binary structure not only on the morphological but also on the syntactic level. This has been represented under (5). The binary structure consists on the surface level of an attributive element — a noun (or noun phrase) or an adjective (or adjectival phrase) — and a pronominal head NP element. The whole constituent has the categorial status of a noun phrase (NP). In the following I will adduce a number of arguments for this syntactic structure.

I will first demonstrate that the pronominal suffixes of the personalised nouns and the adjectival nouns are not simply morphological products, eg. personal endings, which appear due to the application of a morphological rule, but are separate syntactic elements, that is pronouns — something which is also borne out by their semantic interpretation. Note that the pronominal head element is not always expressed by pronominal suffixes, but can also be realized by bound third person pronouns. Compare the forms given under (6a) with the forms given under (6b):

- |     |    |                        |                       |    |                        |                      |
|-----|----|------------------------|-----------------------|----|------------------------|----------------------|
| (6) | a. | <i>kai.y-aṅ</i>        | ( <i>kali</i> 101.40) | b. | <i>kai.y-avan</i>      | ( <i>kali</i> 42.21) |
|     |    | hand-3sm               |                       |    | hand-he                |                      |
|     |    | “he who has a hand”    |                       |    | “he who has a hand”    |                      |
|     |    | <i>nall-a</i>          | ( <i>kuru</i> 357.4)  |    | <i>nall-avai</i>       | ( <i>pari</i> 20.74) |
|     |    | good-3pln              |                       |    | good-they (3pln)       |                      |
|     |    | “the good ones (3pln)” |                       |    | “the good ones (3pln)” |                      |

Examples like (6), in which pronominal suffixes and third person pronouns occur in free variation show that both have the categorial status of a pronominal. Next I will present some evidence for the binary structure of the personalised nouns and the adjectival nouns on the syntactic level. In the case of the personalised nouns, the noun stem alone, that is the attributive noun — to the exclusion of its pronominal head —, can be modified by a relative clause. In example (7) the adjectival clause in brackets, which functions as a relative clause, does not modify the whole personalised noun, that is, the whole complex NP *nāṭ-aṅ* “he, who has a country”. It modifies only the noun stem *nāṭu* “country”, but it does not also modify the pronominal head element:

- (7) ...[ *turukaḷ*... *oru* *talai* *cē.kk-um*] *nāṭ-aṅ*... (*kuru* 13.2-3)  
 rock a place lie-npast+adj country-3sm  
 “... he, who has a country, in which a rock lies on a place ...”

In this example both the noun stem of the personalised noun and the preceding relative clause form one syntactic constituent, that is a complex noun phrase, as shown with the bracketing under (8):

- (8) [[[ *turukaḷ* ... *oru talai cē.kk-um*]<sub>S</sub> *nāṭu*]<sub>NP</sub> -*aṅ*]<sub>NP</sub>

Both elements — the relative clause and the noun stem — form two immediate constituents, and not the noun stem and the pronominal head. This shows also that the pronominal head of the personalised noun is not only modified by an attributive noun but also by a complex noun phrase. Thus even though the pro-

nominal head is phonologically added to a noun stem, syntactically it does not combine with a noun but with a noun phrase. That the pronominal head is not simply be modified by a noun but by a noun phrase can also be demonstrated with the process of coordination. Consider the construction given under (9):

- (9) ... *maḷai.k kaṇ ... peru.n tōḷ-ōy ...* (narri 13.4-5)  
 coolness eye big shoulder-2s  
 “... you who have [cool eyes and big shoulders] ...”

In (9) the pronominal head element in the form of the suffix *-ōy* (second person singular) is added to the noun stem *tōḷ*, with which it forms morphologically a personalised noun. However, syntactically the pronominal head combines with a noun phrase, which consists of the coordination of two noun phrases: [*maḷai.k kaṇ ... peru.n tōḷ*]. In the same way it can be shown that in the case of the adjectival noun the pronominal suffix, even though it combines morphologically with an adjective, syntactically combines with an adjectival phrase. It is important to note that the following examples show also that the modifier element within the adjectival noun behaves grammatically differently from the modifier element within the personalised noun and that, as shown under (5), this attribute is an adjective or an adjectival phrase. Whereas the noun attributes within the personalised nouns can be modified by an adjectival clause or an adjectival NP, as shown under (7), the adjective attributes within the adjectival nouns cannot. Instead, unlike the noun attributes within the personalised noun, the adjective attributes can be complemented by a comparative phrase, as in (10a) or by an adjectival quantifier, like *tava*, as in (10b).

- (10) a. *naṭpu ... nilatt-iṅ-um peru.i-tu* (kuru 3.1.4)  
 friendship earth-comp great-3sn  
 “the friendship is one, which is bigger than the earth”
- b. *uyir tava.c cir.i-tu* (kuru 18.5)  
 life very fragile-3sn  
 “(her) life is a very fragile one”

In (10a) the comparative phrase *nilatt-iṅ-um*, consisting of the noun *nilam* inflected for the fifth case with the suffix *-iṅ* and followed by *-um* — the latter two elements mark the standard of comparison in Old Tamil —, complements the adjective attribute *peru*. Syntactically, both *nilatt-iṅ-um* and *peru* form one syntactic constituent — an adjectival phrase —, which modifies the pronominal head *-tu*, as shown under (11a). Similarly in (10b) the adjectival quantifier *tava* complements the adjective attribute *ciru*, with which it forms one syntactic constituent to the exclusion of the pronominal head, see (11b).

- (11) a. [[*nilatt-iṅ-um*]<sub>COMP</sub> *peru.i*]<sub>ADJP</sub> *-tu*]<sub>NP</sub>
- b. [[*tava.c ciru.i*]<sub>ADJP</sub> *-tu*]<sub>NP</sub>

Next I will give evidence that both elements of the personalised noun and of the adjectival noun form together one constituent with the categorial status of a noun phrase. Notice that the personalised nouns as well as the adjectival nouns can be modified as one constituent by an adnominal attribute. For instance, an adjectival noun can be modified by a demonstrative determiner and a



personalised noun can be modified by a relative clause, in which case the scope of the modification is over the whole word form. First consider example (12):

- (12) *kaṭuvāṅ-um aṟi.y-um a.k koṭ.iy-ōṅ-ai...* (kuru 26.8)  
 monkey-incl know-npast+3spl that cruel-3sm-acc  
 “... the monkey too knows that cruel one ...”

In (12) the adjectival noun *koṭ.iy-ōṅ-ai*, occurring as object NP and hence marked for accusative case, is modified as a whole by the demonstrative determiner *a-* “that” and has, therefore, the categorial status of a noun phrase. Next see example (13):

- (13) [*koṭ.iy-aṅ āk-i.y-a*] ... *nāṭ-aṅ* (kuru 252.2)  
 cruel-3sm be-pst-adj country-3sm  
 “he of the country, who is a cruel one”

In (13) the whole personalised noun *nāṭ-aṅ*, that is both the attributive noun *nāṭu* “country” and its pronominal head *-aṅ*, is modified as one constituent by the relative clause *koṭ.iy-aṅ āk-i.y-a* and this establishes the NP-hood of the personalised noun.

Example (13) is of further interest since it demonstrates also something else. When the adjectival noun *koṭ.iy-aṅ* is relativized, the adjectival complementizer or copula verb form *āk-i.y-a* has to be inserted. The insertion of *āk-i.y-a* occurs only in the relativization of a verbless clause, in which the predicate is a noun phrase. Since adjectival nouns can be relativized with the copula verb form *āk-i.y-a*, evidence is given for their NP-hood.

The categorial status of the personalized nouns and adjectival nouns as noun phrases (NPs) is also evidenced by the fact that both word forms can be followed by a copula verb. This is illustrated by example (14):

- (14) a. *ūr ... yāṅar-ttu āk-um* (pura 318.3,9)  
 village income-3sn be-npst+3sn  
 “the village is one which has (fresh) income”
- b. *celavu ar.i-tu āk-um* (kuru 207.1)  
 going difficult-3sn be-npst+3sn  
 “the going is difficult”

In (14a) the personalised noun *yāṅar-ttu* and in (14b) the adjectival noun *ar.i-tu* occur as predicate. Both are followed by the copula verb *āk-um* and this argues for their status as nominal (NP) predicates.

The categorial status of the personalised nouns and adjectival nouns as noun phrases and the fact that the attributive element of the personalised nouns is also a noun phrase and not just a noun has an interesting consequence. It entails that a personalised noun can also be formed from another personalised noun or adjectival noun. This has already been noticed by Andronov (1989:129). That is to say that the noun phrase which incorporates a pronominal head element can also be a personalised noun or an adjectival noun itself. This is illustrated by the two examples under (15) and (16), of which the former is from Middle Tamil:

- (15) *aṭi.y-aṅ-ēṅ* (tiruvācakam 22.3)  
 slave-3sm-1s  
 “I who am the one (he) who is a slave”
- (16) *putu.v-ōr-ttu* (kuru 385.7)  
 new-3pl-3sn  
 “the one which has the new ones”

The examples and arguments presented so far have demonstrated (a) that both the personalised nouns and the adjectival nouns have the categorial status of noun phrases (NPs) and (b) that they have internally a binary syntactic structure consisting of a modifier and a pronominal head as given under (5). Moreover, it has been shown (c) that the modifier element within the personalised nouns is not just a noun but a noun phrase since it may consist either of a noun modified by a relative clause, as in (7), or of a coordinated structure of two noun phrases, as in (9). And (d) it has been shown that the modifier element within adjectival nouns is also not just an adjective but an adjectival phrase.

#### 4.4. Underlying structure of the personalised nouns

Next I want to take a closer look at the syntactic structure of the personalised nouns. The structure given under (5a) has to be regarded as the surface structure only. The semantic interpretation of the personalised nouns suggests that they have a more complex underlying structure. Let us investigate the semantic relation between the attributive noun or NP and the pronominal head PRO. As already noted by Balasubramaniam (1980), in most cases the basic semantic relation between nominal attribute and pronominal head is the one of possession and location. In addition there are two more basic semantic relations — the one of equation (“like”) and the one of identification. In the absence of a historical grammar of Tamil, a tentative result of the perusal of my data of personalised nouns is that the possessive and locative relation occurs predominantly in Old Tamil and the equative and identifying relation mainly in Middle Tamil. Consider now the four examples given under (17) to (20). The semantic relation between the nominal attribute and the pronominal head of the personalised nouns in (17a) to (20a) is not explicitly expressed but only interpreted as given by the respective translations. In (17b) to (20b) we have the explicit constructions of the personalised nouns as they are semantically interpreted.

- (17) a. *mārp-aṅ* (aiṅk 222.2)  
 chest-3sm  
 “he who has a chest”
- b. *mārp* *uṭai.y-aṅ* (or: *uṭai.y-avaṅ*)  
 chest possess-3sm  
 “he who has a chest”
- (18) a. *kāṅṅa.v-aṅ* (aka 292.10)  
 forest-3sm  
 “he who is in the forest”

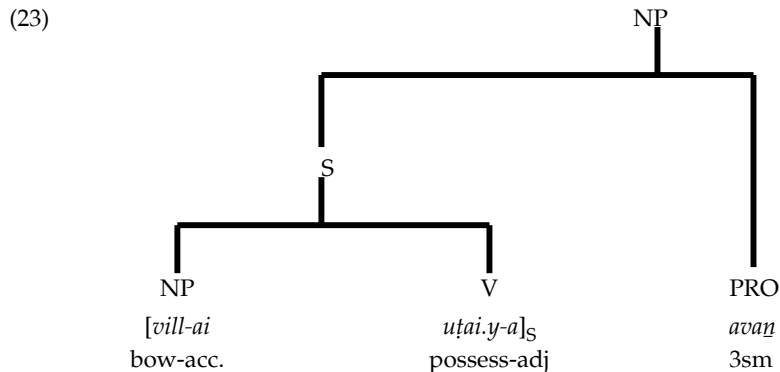
- b. *kāṇa-ttu ul̥-an* (or: *ul̥-avan*)  
 forest-obl be-3sm  
 “he who is in the forest”
- (19) a. *peṇṭ-ir-ēṁ* (pura 246.10)  
 woman-pl-1pl  
 “we who are women”
- b. *peṇṭ-ir āk-i.y-ēṁ* (or: *peṇṭ-ir āk-i.y-a nām*)  
 woman-pl be-pst-1pl  
 “we who are women”
- (20) a. *nāy-ēṇ* (tiruvācakam 3.37)  
 dog-1s  
 “I who am like a dog”
- b. *nāy pōṇ-r-ēṇ* (or: *nāy pōṇ-r-a yāṇ*)  
 dog be like-pst-1s  
 “I who am like a dog”

The semantic interpretation suggests that the syntactic structure of the personalised nouns is essentially the one of a relative clause construction with a pronominal head. In this construction, the semantic relation expressed by the verbal predicate of the relative clause is not explicit but only interpreted. In the explicit constructions in (17b) to (20b) the verbal predicates of the relative clauses are overtly expressed through the verbs *uṭai* “possess”, *ul̥* “be”, *āku* “be” and *pōl* “be like”.

The explicit constructions in (17b) to (20b), in which the semantic relation between a noun and a bound pronominal head is overtly expressed by one of the above given verbs, do also occur in Old Tamil, as the following two examples show:

- (21) *vaṇmai uṭai.y-aṇ* (kali 47.6)  
 strength possess-3sm  
 “he who possesses strength”
- (22) *punattu ul̥-aṇ* (kali 108.31)  
 field(obl) be-3sm  
 “he who is in the field”

One can now postulate that the syntactic structure of the personalised noun as given under (5) is only a surface structure phenomenon. On underlying structure the pronominal head NP is modified by a relative clause containing a verbal predicate like *uṭai* “possess”, *ul̥* “be”, *āku* “be” and *pōl* “be like” and at least one argument NP — the attributive noun on surface structure. The proposed underlying structure is given under (23) :



On surface structure only an argument NP of the verbal predicate (V) of the relative clause (S) is overtly expressed and occurs as nominal modifier of the pronominal head NP (PRO). The verbal predicate (V) of the relative clause, *uṭai.y-a* in the above example, is deleted. It is now important to note that attributive verb deletion is a characteristic feature of noun modification in Old Tamil in general: in many instances of noun modification, the semantic relation between an adnominal attribute and its head — be the latter a noun or a noun phrase —, is not overtly expressed but only interpreted, if this semantic relation is possessive, locative, equative or identifying. This is illustrated by the examples (24) to (27):

- (24) possessive relation  
 [pai.m puṛa] [ciṛu kiḷḷi] (aiṅk 283.3)  
 green back small bird  
 “the small birds who have green backs”
- (25) locative relation  
 [viyal aṛai] yūkam (kali 43.12)  
 wideness stone monkey  
 “the monkey who is on a large stone”
- (26) identifying relation  
 kuppai [veṇ maṇal] (narri 291.3)  
 heap white sand  
 “the white sand which is a heap”
- (27) equative relation  
 [vāṅku amai] meṇ tōl (kali 39.15-16)  
 bend bamboo soft shoulder  
 “the soft shoulder which is like a bent bamboo”

On the other hand, the above semantic relations — the possessive, locative, equative and identifying relation — between an adnominal attribute and its lexical head NP can also be expressed explicitly in Old Tamil by means of a verbal predicate like *uṭai* “possess”, *uḷ* “be”, *pōl* “be like” and *āku* “be”. In this case the respective verb occurs as a predicate of a relative clause — in the form of an adjectival participle or simply in its stem form — and it takes the nouns or noun phrases which function as sole adnominal attributes in (24) to (27) as their

argument NPs. This means that the adnominal attribute is not just a noun phrase as in (24) to (27) but a relative clause consisting minimally of a noun phrase and a verbal predicate. This is illustrated by the examples (28) to (30):

- (28) *toṭi uṭai.y-a tōḷ* (pura 239.1)  
 armlet possess-adj arm  
 “the arms which have armlets”
- (29) *pacu.p pōl peṇṭ-ir* (aiṅk 271.3)  
 cow be like woman-pl  
 “women who are like cows”
- (30) *tuyaram āk-i.y-a nōy* (nari 123.12)  
 grief be-pst-adj suffering  
 “the suffering which is grief”

If we compare now the constructions under (28) to (30) with the constructions under (24) to (27), then we can postulate that in Old Tamil noun modification the verbs which express explicitly the four basic semantic relations of possession, location, equation and identification, that is *uṭai* “possess”, *uḷ* “be”, *pōl* “be like” and *āku* “be”, can be deleted. Accordingly, the constructions in (24) to (27) would be the result of the process of verb deletion. Since the same semantic relation, which exists between the attributive nominal and its head NP in (24) to (27), exists also between the attributive nominal and its pronominal head element in the personalised nouns under (17a) to (20a), we can postulate that in the formation of the personalised nouns the process of verb deletion is also involved and that the constructions under (17b) to (20b) are the underlying structures of the personalised nouns under (17a) to (20a). There is a strong argument that can be adduced for an underlying structure of the personalised nouns like in (17b) to (20b). An interesting observation has been made by Balasubramaniam (1980:70). In the formation of the personalised nouns, the pronominal suffix can also be added to a noun in the locative case. Pronominal suffixes can be added to nouns with the case suffix *-āṇ* in its locative function or to nouns followed by a locative postposition. Consider the examples under (31):

- (31) a. *nūl-iṇ-āṇ-a* (poruḷ 467.2)  
 grammar-euph-loc-3pln  
 “the ones which are in the grammar (books)”
- b. *avar kaṭ-ṭu* (pura 203.10)  
 they loc-3sn  
 “the one that is with them”

In (31a) the pronominal suffix *-a* is added to a noun marked with the case suffix *-āṇ*, which has here locative function, and in (31b) the pronominal suffix *-tu* is added to the locative postposition *-kaṇ*. In each case the occurrence of the locative case marker has to be explained. Locative case markers in Tamil are always assigned by verbs like *uḷ* or *iru* “be (located)” but not by pronouns. Thus only if the verb *uḷ* occurs in underlying structure and assigns locative case to its argument noun, the occurrence of the respective locative case markers with the personalised nouns can be accounted for. Another potential argument for the

underlying structure of (23) and the process of verb deletion in the formation of the personalised nouns is the following interesting example (32).

- (32) *kuḷir icai.y-iṅ icai.y-ā iṅ pāṇi-ttu* (*kuru* 291.2)  
 instrument music-eq agree-vbp sweet rhythm-3sn  
 “the instrument agrees with the music and is the one of/with sweet rhythm”

In (32) the verbal participle *icai.y-ā* is subordinate to the personalised noun *pāṇi-ttu*. One of the rules of Tamil grammar is that every non-finite verb form, like the verbal participle, requires a superordinate verb form, through which it is completed. The verbal predicate within the personalised noun in underlying structure, which is deleted on surface structure, could be this verb form which the verbal participle requires at the end of the sentence. Alternatively, one could argue that the personalised noun in (32) is followed by a copula verb in underlying structure, which completes the verbal participle, and is then deleted on surface structure. Finally notice that the personalised noun forms are positive forms and that some of them have corresponding negative forms. In these negative forms there is an overt negative verb between the nominal attribute and the pronominal head. Consider the word forms under (33), in which the negative verbs *il* and *aḷ* “be not” express the semantic relation of possession in the negative.

- (33) a. *nāṅ-il-ai* (*aka* 116.5)  
 bashfulness-be not-2s  
 “you who have no bashfulness”  
 b. *tuyil-aḷ* (*kali* 45.18)  
 sleep-be not-3sf  
 “she who has no sleep”

These “negative personalised noun” forms have identical syntactic structures like the explicative structures of the personalised nouns under (17b) to (20b).

#### 4.5. Underlying structure of the adjectival noun

It is possible to propose for the adjectival nouns — in analogy to the personalised nouns and the participial nouns — an underlying structure, in which the pronominal head NP is not modified just by an adjectival phrase but also by an adjectival clause, of which the verbal predicate is deleted on surface structure. In this case such a deleted verbal predicate would require a prior nominalisation of the adjectival element so that it can be an argument NP of this verbal predicate. For example, an adjectival noun like *koṭi.y-aṅ* “the cruel one (he)/he who is cruel” (*kuru* 252.2) would have in underlying structure something like

- (34)  $[[\textit{koṭu-mai uṭai.y-a.v}]_S [-aṅ]_{\text{PRO}}]_{\text{NP}}$  “he who has cruelty”,

where the verbal predicate *uṭai* “possess” requires a nominalized form of the adjective stem *koṭu* as argument NP. Such a structure would not necessarily be the initial underlying structure and would entail a much more complicated formation process as it is the case with the personalised nouns and the participial nouns. In most cases the semantic interpretation of the adjectival noun does not

seem to require an underlying structure different from the surface structure given under (5b), that is, a form like *koṭi.y-aṅ* can be interpreted as “the cruel one/he” and need not necessarily be interpreted as “he who is cruel”, which would require that in underlying structure an adjectival or relative clause combines with the pronominal head and not an adjectival phrase as given under (5b). However, examples with adjectival phrase complementation, like (10), suggest a more complicated underlying structure for the adjectival nouns.

## 5. Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to provide a basic grammatical analysis of the word forms traditionally called *kuṟippu vinai* and by later grammarians often referred to as appellative nouns or appellative verbs. I showed that these word forms have different grammatical properties, which necessitates their division into a class of defective verbs on the one hand, and two classes of personalised nouns and adjectival nouns on the other hand. Further, I tried to establish the categorial status of personalised nouns and of adjectival nouns as noun phrases (NP) on surface structure with a more complex underlying structure of the personalised nouns. And I suggested the formation of these word forms through the morphological process of pronoun incorporation, which applies not only to the formation of personalised nouns and adjectival nouns but also to the formation of participial nouns. What are the properties of pronoun incorporation in Old Tamil and, in particular, what triggers the incorporation of a pronominal head NP? In the case of the personalised nouns it is clearly the syntactic process of adjectival predicate deletion in underlying structure, which triggers pronoun incorporation. In the case of most participial nouns, on the other hand, pronoun incorporation, is a mere morphological process, where the morphological incompleteness of the adjectival predicate — tensed verb instead of an adjectival participle — triggers the pronoun incorporation, as for example in the case of *vāḷ-p-avar* “they who live” (*naṟṟi* 217.1). But note cases like *aṟi.y-um-ōṅ* “he who knows” (*puṟa* 137.4), where an adjectival participle combines with a pronominal head. With adjectival nouns, however, pronoun incorporation could be the result of a syntactic process as well as simply be the process of compounding. There are some grammatical aspects of the personalised nouns and adjectival nouns which still have to be dealt with: for example their usage with the neuter singular and plural pronominal suffix *-atu* and *-a* as adnominal modifiers and the usage of the adjectival nouns with the neuter singular pronominal suffix *-tu* as adverbial modifiers.

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