

## The Variable Relation of Verbs in Sequence in Tamil

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Nouns in a sequence in Tamil have genetic relationship making a noun phrase or a case relationship making a compound. Verbs in a sequence, on the other hand, have a more complex relationship in making a syntactic or a lexical structure. Though a compound noun N-N or V-N<sup>1</sup> structure could be a (nominal) predicate in Tamil, it does not have two or more predicating elements like compound verbs. Hence it is the sequence of words in which the second is a verb that is discussed under predicates that are complex. Of these structures, the one in which both word are verbs is the subject of this paper. The linguistic literature on this structure in Indian languages employs a multitude of terms to designate a V-V sequence, of which serial verb construction (SVC) or serial verbs (Steever 1988, Pandharipande 1993) and complex predicate (CP) (Varma 1993, Butt 1997, 2010) or compound (Hook 1974, Kaul 2006) / composite (Dasgupta 1977) verb are two overarching names<sup>2</sup>. CP covers V-V and N-V predicates while SVC covers only the former. Studies of other languages of the world are not unanimous either about the differences between the designations serial verb construction and complex predicate. Aikhenwald (2006:5) claims that “serial constructions are different from complex predicates”. Baker and Harvey (2010:13) claim that the “the term ‘complex predicate’ has a wide usage, including, for example, serial verb constructions and light verb constructions, and particle + verb constructions, among others”. Noun + verb constructions, with or without noun incorporation, will come under ‘among other things’ in this view. Complex predicate (CP) is then a hyper-category name. ‘Light verb construction’ (Butt 2010) is the asymmetrical SVC of Aikhenwald (2006: 21). SVC is treated as a hyper-category in this view. SVC covers an extraordinarily wide range of the V-V structure on empirical grounds. The verbs in SVC could be symmetrical or asymmetrical, contiguous or non-contiguous, marked or unmarked for grammatical categories (tense, aspect and others), sharing arguments or not sharing arguments at one level of analysis and so on. (Aikhenwald 2006:37-44, 13). One definition of SVC is: “(it) is a sequence of verbs which act together as a single predicate, without any overt marker of coordination, subordination, or syntactic dependency of any sort. ... describe(s) what is conceptualizes as a single event... (is) mono-clausal<sup>3</sup>...” (Aikhenwald 2006:1). One definition of CP is: (it) is used to designate a construction that involves two or more predicational elements (such as nouns, verbs, and adjectives) which predicate as a single element, i.e. their arguments map onto a mono-clausal syntactic structure (Butt 2010:49). The common feature of SVC and CP in the definitions is that both are monoclausal, i.e. they share the syntactic property of simple predicates in having one argument structure, which is shared by the Vs or merged from the Vs. The difference between SVC and CP is that the constituents of former are of the same word category (V) whereas the constituents of the latter are of the same (V) or different word categories. Contiguity of the word categories to make a unitary predicate is proto-typical, but is not mandatory in SVC or CP.

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<sup>1</sup> The bare form the verb modifies a noun in V-N compounds in Tamil, called *vinai-t tokai* ‘verb compound’ in the traditional grammar. The verb admitted predicated elements (arguments and modifiers) in old Tamil, but not in modern Tamil

<sup>2</sup> Fedson (1981) uses serial verbs and compound verbs as alternate names for the same phenomenon.

<sup>3</sup> Foley (2010:80) includes structures (that he calls ‘related clause chaining construction’ under SVC on the basis of its other SVC properties.

I will discuss the V-V structure in Tamil with the defined properties later in this paper. I shall first filter out the verb sequences in Tamil that are not serial verbs. In these structures, two verbs appear to be in a sequence of which one is a light verb in the sense that it is semantically bleached, though is phonologically indistinguishable from full verbs that occur in isolation.

### Infinitive + Verb

Tamil uses light verbs with infinitives to express an activity (such as causation) performed on the full verb expressed in the infinitive, which activity is closer to a grammatical function. The light verbs are *vay*, *viḍu* and *paar*, whose equivalent full verbs mean respectively ‘place’, ‘let go’, ‘see / look’. The light verbs express the non-referential meanings ‘cause’, ‘let’ and ‘try’ respectively.

- 1a. *nī ivane paḍikka vacce / viṭṭe*  
 you he-acc read-inf cause-pa-agr / let-pa-agr  
 ‘You made / let him read’
- b. *nī ide paḍikka pātte*  
 you it-acc read-inf try-pa-agr  
 ‘You tried to read this’

The lexical integration between the infinitive and the light verb is weak in (1) to make it a word. The question marker *-ā* can be added to the infinitive for emphasis; the echo form that replaces the initial (C)V- of the infinitive to *(k)i-* (*kiḍikka* in (1)) to mean ‘some similar thing’ can occur after the infinitive in non-assertive sentences. (1) is not mono-clausal. The light verb can have its own complement, for example, an adverb *epḍi* ‘how’. When this complement is present in (1), the scope of it could be just the light verbs cause, permit and try excluding the infinitive from the scope: how did you cause / permit / try ... The scope of the complement could be the infinitive: what manner of reading did you cause / permit/ try... This shows that the infinitive and the light verb could be decoupled for scope. (1a) can have another object (e.g. Tamil) and the predicate in a single clause does not permit double direct objects without conjunction (except in the case of a special relationship between the objects such as whole and part). Such pieces of evidence suggest that this structure is not mono-clausal (contrary to the claim for Urdu (Bhatt 1997:109).

That (1) is bi-clausal is reinforced by the facts of scrambling, which does not break clause boundary. The subject *nī* ‘you’ in (1) can be moved closer to the light verb, which is its predicate in the main clause. The scrambling makes the subject a part of new information. As such, the sentence is pragmatically marked.

- 2a. *ivane paḍikka ēn nī vacce? / viṭṭe?*  
 he-acc read-inf why you cause-pa-agr let-pa-agr  
 ‘Why did you make / let him read?’
- b. *ide paḍikka ēn nī pātte?*  
 it-acc read-inf why you try-pa-agr  
 ‘Why did you try to read this?’

The infinitive + light verb structure shares with the structure of a sequence of two main verbs (say, *paḍi* ‘study’ and *sollu* ‘say’) this freedom of reordering of words, as in (3). This makes the infinitive + light verb structure bi-clausal like the sequence of two main verbs<sup>4</sup> and so it cannot be a CP.

- 3a. *nī ivane paḍikka sollu / ivane paḍikka nī sollu*  
 you he-acc read-inf tell he-acc read-inf you tell  
 ‘You tell him to read’  
 b. *nī ippavē paḍikka ukkāṛ / ippavē paḍikka nī ukkāṛ*  
 you now-emp read-inf sit  
 ‘You sit right now to read’

The infinitive + light verb structure cannot be SVC by another criterion as well. As per the defining property of SVC, the verbs that constitute it cannot have any syntactic dependency with one another. (Aikhenwald 2006:1). The full verb in (1) is inflected with *-a* to mark the syntactic category of infinitive.

### Get Passive

The verb *paḍu* ‘be touched, be experienced’ occurs with bare verbs and give the light verb meaning of ‘be subjected to’. Its grammatical equivalent in English is the so-called ‘get passive’, which is glossed as ‘get done’.

4. *kaḍale nallā suḍu / varu paḍale*  
 peanut well roast / fry be subjected to-neg  
 ‘Peanuts did not get roasted / fried well’

This structure is a good candidate to be a verb sequence that is a mono-clausal. But there are identical structures constituted by noun + *paḍu*.

5. *avan nallā aḍi / midi paṭṭān*  
 he well hitting stamping be subjected to-pa-agr  
 ‘He got hit / stamped severely’

It should, however, be pointed out that the forms such as *aḍi*, *midi* are homophonous and could be a noun and or a verb. This opens up the possibility of treating these forms in (5) as verbs and the combined forms such as *aḍipaḍu* as V-V. Aikhenwald (2006: 26) points to languages that have SVC for the grammatical function of ‘get passive’. But there is a problem in Tamil to treat such structures as V-V in that the first word can be relativized as nouns are, as in (6a), just like the comparable structures that are compound verbs of the form N-V (7) but are lexicalized. They are lexical because, unlike (5), they have a corresponding morphological causative form

<sup>4</sup> There are a few instances of infinitive + light verb, where this structure is lexicalized and is mono-clausal. *aḍi* ‘hit’ with the infinitives *marakka* ‘to forget’, *vatta* ‘to dry’ gives *marakkaḍi* ‘make someone forget’ and *vattaḍi* ‘make something become dry’ (Fedson 1981:230). *aḍi* ‘hit’ is a light verb like *vay* ‘place’ and has the same grammatical function of causative. The lexicalization process induces a *sandhi* of dropping the final *-a* of the infinitive. These lexicalized complex predicates are not made of verb base + *aḍi*, as Steever (2005:39) claims; the rare *sandhi* of deletion of *-a* is attested in literary texts: *ezuka* ‘may you rise’ + *ena* ‘while said’ gives *ezukena*.

*kaṣṭappaḍuttu* ‘make one suffer’ (7c). Further, the forms such as *aḍi*, *midi* could be modified with a noun as in *kallaḍi* ‘stone-hit’ (i.e. hit with a stone) proving that they are nouns. Their structure with light verbs therefore is N-V, not V-V. The verbs in (4), on the other hand, cannot be relativized (6b) nor modified with a noun modifier. Their structure with light verbs is V-V.

- 6a. *avan paṭṭa aḍi / midi*  
 he get-pa-rel hitting / stamping  
 ‘The hitting / stamping he got’
- b. \**kaḍale paṭṭa suḍu / varu*  
 peanut get-pa-rel roast fry  
 ‘\*The roasting / frying peanuts got’

- 7a. *avan nallā kaṣṭappaṭṭān*  
 he well suffering-get-pa-agr  
 ‘He suffered a lot’
- b. *avan paṭṭa kaṣṭam*  
 he get-pa-rel suffering  
 The suffering he went through’
- c. *nān avane kaṣṭappaḍuttunēn*  
 I he-acc suffering-get-cause-pa-agr  
 ‘I made him suffer’
- d. *nān avane paḍuttuna kaṣṭam*  
 I he-acc get-cause-pa-rel suffering  
 ‘The suffering I made him go through’

The structure both in (4) and (5) is mono-clausal since it does not have the properties attributed to the infinitive + light verb structures discussed above except for placing the question form after the noun for focus. This shows that this get passive structure does not have lexical integrity, though it is mono-clausal. Note that (5) above is different from (8) below. The argument Object is in the nominative case (*avan* ‘he’) in (5) and the argument Experiencer is in the dative case (*avanukku* ‘to him’) and Object argument is in the nominative (*aḍi* ‘hitting’) in (8). The structure noun + *paḍu* in (8) is bi-clausal by the same tests that showed that the structure of infinitive + light verbs is bi-clausal, though the adverb *nallā* ‘severely’ modifies the whole structure. Note that the verb in verb + *paḍu* as in (4) cannot be the nominative and so the structure does not admit Experiencer argument.

8. *avanukku nallā aḍi paṭṭudu*  
 he-dat well hitting get-pa-agr (neuter)  
 ‘He got hit severely’

The above facts show that it is appropriate to treat V/N + *paḍu* as CP as one of its components could belong to any word category unlike the components of SVC. SVC is one manifestation of CP.

Duplicated N or V

Another case of a mono-clausal N/V-V is duplication of the base of the finite verb in its nominal or verbal form for intensity, as in (9a) and (10a). The nominal form is the base form or the derived noun from the verb. This duplication is possible with intransitive verbs also (9b) and so it is not generated in the phrase structure. The duplicated nominal form can be relativized like any noun. While *aḍi* ‘hit’ and *midi* ‘trample’ in (9a) are both a verb and a noun lexically, *siri* ‘laugh’ in (9b) is a verb, whose nominal form *sirippu* ‘laughter’ is a derived noun (*siri* + *-ppu*).

- 9a. *nān avane oru aḍi aḍiccēn / midi midiccēn*  
 I he-acc a hitting hit-pa-agr / stamping stamp-pa-agr  
 ‘I gave him a good beating’
- b. *nān oru ciri ciriccēn*  
 I a laugh laugh-pa-agr  
 ‘I had a good (scary) laugh’
- c. *nān oru sirippu siriccēn*  
 I a laughing laugh-pa-agr  
 ‘I had a good (scary) laugh’

There are also cases of the duplication of verb in its verbal form. The nominal form of the verb *more* ‘stare at’ is *moreppu* ‘stare’ and the noun form is not the duplicated form in (10a). (This noun (*moreppu*) could be the head of the relative clause (10b), but not the verb form (*more*)).

It should be noted that the apparent numeral adjective and the indefinite article *oru* ‘a’ modifies the verb *more* (10a) as well the nouns (9a). *oru* ‘a’ in this structure seems, from the meaning the full sentence, to denote, not a numeral or indefiniteness, but intensity of action. The claim that *aḍi*, *midi* in (9a) is a noun and *more* in (10a) is a verb is supported by the fact that the numerals (*reṇḍu* ‘two’ etc.) can modify the former that are nouns, but not the latter that are verbs. Other nouns that are homophonous with verbs include *taṭṭu* ‘tap’, *piṭi* ‘hold’, *veṭṭu* ‘cut’, *are* ‘slap’, *kuttu* ‘punch’, *kodi* ‘boil’<sup>5</sup>.

- 10a. *nān avane oru more /\*moreppu morecēn*  
 I he-acc a stare / staring stare-pa-agr  
 ‘I gave him a good stare’
- b. *nān morecca \*moRele / moreppule avan payanduṭṭān*  
 I stare-pa-rel stare-loc staring-loc he be scared-pa-com-pa-agr  
 ‘He was frightened by my stare’

<sup>5</sup> The verbs that do not duplicate seem to be restricted to verbs of bodily expression or action on another. In (1a), where the verb *veru* ‘hate’ refers to a mental state with regard to another, duplication of the verb is ungrammatical. In (1b), where the verb *pār* ‘see’ is not a physical action that impinges on another, duplication of the verb is ungrammatical.

- 1a. *\*nān avane oru veru /veruppu veruttēn*  
 I he-acc a hate / hatred hate-pa-agr  
 ‘\*I had a good hatred of him’
- b. *\*nān avane oru pār /pārve pāttēn*  
 I he-acc a see / sight see-pa-agr  
 ‘\* I had a good sight of him’

Note that in (9a) there are two accusative case nouns (*avane* ‘him’ and *aḍi* ‘hitting, blow’), which is unusual for a unitary predicate. When the structure is taken as a complex predicate, then the noun *aḍi* is the object of the verb *aḍi* ‘hit’ and both together, as a complex predicate, take the object *avane* ‘him’. (9) is structurally similar to another structure of noun + light verb (11a). The light verb *pōḍu* ‘place, put’ has a tendency to behave like the main verb *kuḍu* ‘give’ (11b), with the uncertain grammaticality of the dative in the sentence. *kuḍu* ‘give’ in (11b), on the other hand, is a clear unitary predicate, which does not permit double accusative. We could say that *aḍi pōḍu* ‘place /land a blow’ is on the path of becoming a complex predicate *aḍi+pōḍu*.

- 11a. *nān* ?*avanukku* / *avane oru aḍi pōṭṭēn*  
 I he-dat / he-acc a hitting drop-pa-agr  
 ‘I landed a blow on him’  
 b. *nān avanukku* / \**avane oru aḍi kuḍuttēn*  
 I he-dat he-acc a hitting give-pa-agr  
 ‘I gave him a blow’

If the analysis of duplicated N/V-V as a complex predicate is correct, it again shows that SVC is one manifestation of CP.

### Two Vs in code mixing

Tamil makes compound verbs of the structure N-V by adding the verb *paṇṇu* ‘do’ to nouns: *muyarcci paṇṇu* ‘do (make) effort’, i.e. ‘try’; *kalyāṇam paṇṇu* ‘do (perform) marriage’, i.e. ‘marry’. But in code mixing with English, in addition to an English noun + *paṇṇu* (reservation-*paṇṇu* ‘make reservation, reserve), English verb + *paṇṇu* is used, where *paṇṇu* carries the inflection: try-*paṇṇu* ‘try’, marry-*paṇṇu* ‘marry’, reserve-*paṇṇu* ‘reserve’ etc. This looks like a verb sequence drawing the verbs from two languages, but it is not a V-V sequence at all<sup>6</sup>. It is morphological strategy to inflect a verb mixed from another language (Annamalai 1971:26). This verbal form never has separate complements or arguments of the component verbs in it that are merged under a unitary predicate and so it does not qualify to be an SVC.

### Verbal participle + verb

The V-V sequence that has received most attention in Tamil from linguists is the structure verbal participle (VbP) + light verb (often called auxiliary verb (different from the grammatical category auxiliary), sometimes in the sense of carrying a grammatical function, sometimes in the sense of being less than a verb)<sup>7</sup>. In a sequence of two or more verbs, all verbs other than the last one are in the morphological form of the verb inflected for past tense expressing precedence

<sup>6</sup> Baker and Harvey (2010:16) claim syntactic V-V structure for a construction of V + light verb, where V is a borrowed word. The borrowed word is assimilated in his example, which is not the case in code mixing in Tamil. Butt (2010:52) treats such mixing as instances of the N-V structure that is CP without giving any facts of their syntactic behavior in support of such a treatment. The borrowed form need is an English verb; it could be an English predicate preposition (on-*paṇṇu* ‘turn on (the switch)’); it could be an English adjective and past participle when the Tamil verb is *āgu* ‘come to be’ (cool- *āgu* ‘become cool’, tired- *āgu* ‘become tired’) (Annamalai 1971:20)

<sup>7</sup> The term serial verbs is used in Dravidian historical linguistic research to refer to a sequence of verb bases (Steever 1988), but the term includes inflected forms of the verb as well from a cross-linguistic point of view (Aikhenwald 2006: 3-4).

relationship to the following verb. The most common meaning of this sequence is conjunction of verbs in a temporal sequence. In this structure of  $V_1 - V_2$ , both could be full verbs that have referential meaning semantically, have the same status grammatically and come from an infinitive set of verbs.  $V_2$  could be a light verb, which is not referential, and it augments the meaning of  $V_1$  (verb of action or verb of state) or of the whole the sentence (i.e. proposition). It comes from a finite set of verbs. Linguists have studied the syntax of this structure (Schiffman 1969, Steever 2005) and its semantics (Lindholm 1969, Fedson 1981, Annamalai 1982). All scholars agree that the dividing line between the category of main verbs and of light verbs is porous and they differ in the number of verbs designated as light verbs. Annamalai (1982:15) gives a set of diagnostic tests to identify light verbs after VbP, but claims that they form a cline in a scale of verbhood from a full verb with referential meaning to a bound form with grammatical meaning with regard to collocation with specific full verbs (syntagmatic) and in relation to each other (paradigmatic).

Steever (2005:3) gives a taxonomy of V-V sequences in Tamil through binary branching. I shall examine in this paper the syntactic integrity and semantic homogeneity of VbP + V (Steever's one-clause structure and two-clause structure come under this). That is, in the possible V-V sequences, this construction has VbP in the form verb +past tense marker and  $V_2$  as a finite verb (or any verb form of the higher clause). There is no specific marker of syntactic dependency in this structure other than the past tense marker, which simply indicates sequencing of verbs. This raises the question whether these sequences are instances of SVC. VbP clause is shown to be a subordinate clause as it allows moving out a constituent that is inside it (Annamalai 1970). Hence, the verbs in (12) will not qualify to be serial verbs<sup>8</sup>. Furthermore, the verbs in sequence can have different arguments. Borrowing the book and reading it can take place at the same location (library) or reading could take place in another location that is unspecified or specified (house). V-V has two locatives in (12a) and two subjects in (12b). VbP+V therefore is bi-clausal, where the Vs are in a temporal sequential relationship.

- 12a. nān laibrerile pustagam eḍuttu (vīṭṭule) paḍiccēn  
 I library-loc book take-pa (house-loc) read-pa-agr  
 'I borrowed a book from the library and read it there / in the house'
- b. nān laibrerile pustagam eḍuttu avan paḍiccān  
 I library-loc book take-pa he read-pa-agr  
 'I borrowed a book from the library and he read it'

### VbP + semi-light verb

Let me examine some similar constructions of VbP-V sequence, where the V is neither full nor light.

- 13a. nān inda pustagatte paḍiccu-p pāttēn  
 I this book-acc read-pa try-pa-agr

<sup>8</sup> Stewert (2001:270) raises the absence of tense to the level of setting parameter for a language to have SVC. He generalizes the presence of bare verbs in SVC in the West African language Edo as a principle that stipulates that "No verb in the serial verb construction can bear morphological tense inflection". But the Tamil data of SVC discussed below falsify this principle.

- ‘I tried reading this book’  
 b. nān avanukku inta pustagatte paḍiccu-k kāṭṭunēn.  
 I he-dat this book-acc read-pa show-pa-agr  
 ‘I showed him reading this book’

The clitics such as the interrogative marker, emphatic marker could occur with VbP +V or with the VbP showing that VbP+V is not lexicalized. The question remains if it is mono-clausal in (13). Note that *kāṭṭu* ‘show’ is semantically the causative of *pār* ‘see’, but we are not deconstructing the lexical verbs into semantic primes that are in clausal relationship as in a generative semantic analysis. The whole VbP clause is in object relation with the finite verb *pār* in its semi-light verb sense ‘try’. This verb requires a clausal object. (13a) would be ungrammatical without the VbP which would translate as ‘I tried this book’ but would have the full verb meaning of *pār* translating as ‘I saw the book’. The same is true of *kāṭṭu* in its semi-light verb sense of ‘try to show’. That V2 has clausal object and V1 is the predicate of this clause shows that V-V in (13) is not a mono-clause, though V2 is a semi-light verb semantically. The purpose of trying in (13a) is left unsaid, which could include ‘if I will be able to read, pass the exam etc., if the book is difficult, good etc.’. The unsaid purpose of trying to prove would be ‘that I was able to read, that he could see the difficulty, goodness etc. of the book’. If any of the purpose is present in the sentence, it will be a complement clause of V-V with *-nnu* ‘that’.

(13) is syntactically similar to (14), but *muḍi* ‘finish’ is a full verb having object relationship to the VbP. The VbP can be absent with this verb giving the meaning ‘I finished this book’ to (14a).

- 14a. nān inda pustagatte (paḍiccu) muḍiccēn  
 I this boo-acc (read-pa) finish-pa-agr  
 ‘I finished (reading) this book’

*muḍi* does not represent the aspectual sense of completion, as the light verb *viḍu* does (see below). V-V in (14) cannot be symmetrical serial verbs because it is not mono-clausal. (14d), which is the negative of (14a), negates only V2. The scope of negation in (14d) is the verb of finishing. V<sub>1</sub> and V<sub>2</sub> could have adverbs modifying each or one of the verbs separately as in (14b) and (14c).

- b. nān inda pustagatte aaseyaa paḍiccu muḍiccēn  
 I this book-acc desire-adv read-pa finish-pa-agr  
 ‘I finished reading enthusiastically this book’  
 c. nān inta pustagatte denam paḍiccu veegamaa muḍiccēn  
 I this book-acc daily read-pa speed-adv finish-pa-agr  
 ‘I read this book daily and finished it fast’  
 d. nān inda pustagatte innom paḍiccu muḍikkale  
 I this book-acc yet read-pa finish-inf-neg  
 ‘I have not yet finished reading this book’

VbP + attitudinal light verb



In the following sentences, the light verb expresses the attitude of the speaker to the proposition. This sense is not of any grammatical category, but it is semantic as these light verbs behave as attitudinal verbs such as *be in anticipation of*, *be reluctant*, *disbelieve* etc. No new verbs of attitude are created, but semantically appropriate verbs permit the inference of an attitudinal sense in the context of their occurrence with VbP. Without VbP, these verbs do not express any attitudinal sense. VbP + attitudinal light verb is a mono-clausal structure by the fact that the full verb and the light verb do not have separate arguments or modifiers. In fact, the light verb does not have assigned arguments. The light verbs of attitude share the form of full verbs *vay* ‘place down’, *pōḍu* ‘put / drop down’, *tole* ‘get lost / lose’, *azu* ‘cry’, *kizi* ‘tear’. Their attitudinal meanings respectively are: *vay* ‘do for a consequence, with an eye for future usefulness’, *pōḍu* ‘same as *vay*, but doing non-deliberately’, *tole* ‘do against will or reluctantly as last option’, *azu* ‘do out of compulsion or as having no option’, *kizi* ‘express lack of confidence in another person doing a thing’.

- 15a. nān inda pustagatte paḍiccu vaccēn  
 I this book-acc read-pa keep-pa-agr  
 ‘I read this book (as it might be of use later)’
- b. nān kadave terandu vacceen / pōṭṭēn  
 I door-acc open-pa keep-pa-agr / drop-pa-agr  
 ‘I kept / left the door open’
- c. nān inda pustagatte paḍiccu toleccēn  
 I this book-acc read-pa lose-pa-agr  
 ‘I read this book (as there was no other way)’
- d. avan kaḍesiyā pōy tolenjān  
 he end-adv go-pa get lost-pa-agr  
 ‘He finally left and got lost’
- e. naan kaḍesiyā avanukku pattu rūbā kuḍuttu azudēn.  
 I end-adv he-dat ten rupee give-pa cry-pa-agr  
 ‘I finally gave him ten rupees reluctantly’
- f. nī inda pustagatte paḍiccu kizicce  
 you this book-acc read-pa tear-pa-agr  
 ‘(I don’t believe that) you will read this book’

Some light verbs could retain the attitudinal sense even when it is not in combination of a full verb. The VbP could be absent in (15e) and *azu* could have the attitudinal sense. This is not the case with (15a), where *vaccēn* will have the sense ‘I placed down this book’ when the VbP is absent. The exception with regard to *azu* could be explained as a case of metonymy, where the transferred sense by contiguity remains even when the word in contiguity is absent. That the light verb does not stand alone in its light verb sense is a defining property of light verbs. Though these light verbs do not have predicational properties, they are CP’s because of their verbal status that permits inflection. They are anyway SVC.

### VbP + grammatical light verbs

The light verbs perform a grammatical function in the following sentences. The grammatical function is the expression of speaker perception about the event whether it really took place (*viḍu*

*/-du*), whether the effect of the event lingers having relevance after the event, both of which are commonly placed under the category of aspect, whether the event's happening is known through inference, which is called evidential (*iru / -ru*), whether the event has any effect on the subject (*ko(l) / kiḍu*), which is placed under the category of voice. The light verbs in this class of V-V sequence differ in their grammaticalization status. The status varies in range from being semantically opaque, being inflectional morphologically (that is, they are not selective about combining with specific verbs) and being reduced phonologically to non-lexical canonical forms, at one end of the spectrum to being semantically transparent, being syntactically a verb in assigning cases and being selective in their combinatory choices with verbs. These light verbs thus form a cline in their freedom to combine with verbs and their status to be unambiguously categorized as a light verb. (Annamalai 1985:140).

- 16a. nān inda pustagatte paḍiccēn  
 I this book-acc read-pa-agr  
 'I read this book'
- b. nān inda pustagatte paḍiccuṭṭēn  
 'I this book-acc read-pa-com-pa-agr  
 'I have read this book'
- c. nān inda pustagatte paḍiccu muḍiccuṭṭēn  
 I this book-acc read-pa finish-pa-com-pa-agr  
 'I have finished reading this book'
- d. nān inda pustagatte nālu taḍave paḍiccuṭṭēn  
 I this book-acc four times read-pa-com-pa-agr  
 'I did read this book four times'
- e. nān inda pustagatte nālekku paḍicciḍuvēn  
 I this book-acc tomorrow read-pa-com-pa-agr  
 I will certainly read this book tomorrow'

Tamil verbs are unmarked for accomplishment or completion. (16a) could be followed without contradiction by the equivalent of 'but I did not finish it'. This follow up sentence will be a contradiction in (16b). So this light verb is described as marking the completion of an act or closing of an event (Annamalai 1985:80-103, Fedson 1981:80-93, Steever 2005:185-195). This, however, is questioned by (16c), where this light verb combines with the *muḍi* 'finish' and it is not redundant. This light verb can be said to assert the fact that the event did take place. (16d) asserts that the reading of the book took place three times; (16e) asserts that the reading of the book will take place. This led the linguists to assign this light verb the grammatical function of definiteness in future. But both in the past and the future it is the assertion of the occurrence of the event or existence of a state.

The light verb in (16) is in the form of *-du*, which is not a canonical form of a verb in Tamil and there is no full verb of this form. Nevertheless, it relates to the light verb *viḍu* used in the same grammatical sense in formal Tamil. The corresponding full verb *viḍu* in both formal and colloquial Tamil has the meaning of 'let go'. *-du* behaves like a verb in belonging to the appropriate conjugation class of verbs and in taking all verbal forms such as the infinitive, conditional etc. The meaning of this light verb is totally divorced from the meaning of its

counterpart full verb. It is free to combine with any verb including stative verbs. It is a light verb that is grammaticalized, but constitutes an SVC.

Linguists have attributed a context-specific meaning to this light verb, which is realization of the occurrence of an event that was expected to happen or not to happen. (Annamalai 1985: 91-92, Fedson 1981:63-64, Bashir 1993:6 for a discussion of it).

- 17a. obāmā tērdalle      jeyiccittār  
       Obama election-loc win-pa-com-pa-agr  
 b. nān kīze vizunduṭṭēn  
       I down fall-pa-com-pa-agr  
       ‘I have fallen down (unexpectedly)’  
 c. nī tūngiḍāde  
       you sleep-pa-com-neg-imp  
       ‘Don’t fall down (be careful)’

It could however be argued that realization of expectation or realization contrary to expectation is pragmatic and is a conversational implicature. The implicature arises from Grice’s principle of cooperation which includes the maxim of quantity, which stipulates that you do not make your utterance more informative than required (cited in Levinson 2000:14). The sense relating to the expectation of the occurrence is implicated by the utterance, not said in it. That this sense is an implicature is borne out by the test of reinfocability (Levinson 2000:15). This sense not made redundant by having explicit adverbs of expectation in the sentence (17d). The sentence with the first adverb ‘as expected’ is said when the father is expected to arrive at five o’clock and it occurred at that time; it said with the second adverb ‘unexpectedly’ when the arrival of the father was expected at another time. Either case does not redundant to the implicature of expectation.

- 17d. appā anju manikku edirpāttapaḍi / edirpākkāma vanduṭṭār.  
       father five hour-loc expect-rel-as / expect-not come-pa-com-pa-agr  
       ‘Father came at five o’clock (as expected / unexpectedly)’

There are two other light verbs *poo* ‘go’, *āgu* ‘come to be’ which are used near-synonymously as *-du* in the sense of asserting occurrence. *poo* is used preferentially when the occurrence is of change of state and it combines with change of state verbs such as *keḍu* ‘get spoiled’; *āgu* is used (its agreement marker is neuter singular taking the event itself as its subject and it is used only as a finite verb<sup>9</sup> in the light verb sense) only when there is presupposition that the asserted

<sup>9</sup> The finite verb includes the indicative as well as the modal as long as the indicative is positive and the modal is obligatory.

- 2a. nān inda pustagatte paḍiccāccu      / \*paḍiccāgale  
       I this boo-acc read-pa-become-pa&agr (neuter) read-pa-become-inf-neg  
       ‘I have read this book / I have not read this book’  
 b. nān inda pustagatte paḍiccāgaṇum /      \* paḍiccāgalām  
       I this book-acc read-pa-become-inf-must / read-pa-become-inf-may  
       ‘I ought to read this book / I may certainly read this book’

occurrence is expected to happen. Though it is linguistically appropriate to say either of the two sentences in (18), it is socially inappropriate to say (18b).

- 18a. *avan cettu-p pōnān*  
 he die-pa-go-pa-agr  
 ‘He did die’
- b. *avan cettāccu*  
 he die-pa- become-pa&agr (neuter)  
 ‘He is dead (as expected)’

The ubiquitous verb *iru* ‘be’, as a light verb combined with VbP, has three senses viz., staying in state of a performed act to be relevant to another act or to the speech act, existence of an event before the time of the speech act but is relevant to it, extrapolating an act from the state that stays. These three senses are named respectively as perfect aspect or resulting state, existential past and evidential. These three senses, however, are related and the common thread is the existence of a state arising out of an act. This light verb is semantically transparent, but in combination with VbP assumes non-referential meaning. The sentences in (19) illustrate the first sense (viz., resulting state).

- 19a. *avan kuḍiccirukkān / kuḍiccirundān / kuḍicciruppān*  
 he drink-pa-stat-pr-agr/ drink-pa-stat-pa-agr/drink-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘He is drunk / He was drunk / He will be drunk’
- b. *on caṭṭe kizinjirukku / kizinjirundudu / kizinjirukkum*  
 your shirt tear-pa-stat-pr&agr tear-pa-stat-pa-agr tear-pa-stat-fut&agr  
 ‘Your shirt is torn / Your shirt was torn / Your shirt will be torn’
- c. *avan on viiṭṭule ukkaandurukkān / ukkaandurundān / ukkaanduruppān*  
 he your house-loc sit-pa-stat-pr-agr / sit-pa-stat-pa-agr / sit-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘He is sitting in your house / He was sitting in your house / He will be sitting in your house’
- d. *avan enṭiṭṭe paṇam keeṭṭurukkān / keeṭṭurundān / keeṭṭuruppān*  
 he I-with money ask-pa-stat-pr-agr ask-pa-stat-pa-agr ask-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘He has asked me for money / He had asked me for money / He will have asked me for money’

The sentences in (20) illustrate the second sense (viz., past existence).

- 20a. *avan munnāle oru taḍave kuḍiccirukkān*  
 he before one time drink-pa-stat-pr-agr  
 ‘He has drunk once before (in the past)’
- b. *on caṭṭe munnāle oru taḍave kizinjirukku*  
 your shirt before one time tear-pa-stat-pr-agr  
 ‘Your shirt has been torn once before (in the past)’
- c. *avan munnāle oru taḍave on viiṭṭule ukkaandurukkān*  
 he before one time your house-loc sit-pa-stat-pr-agr

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Fedson (1981:69) notes that *aagu* is acceptable, though restrictively, in the negative indicative (when the sentence implies ‘not yet’) and in the relative participle used in the temporal clause (*cāppitṭāna peragu* ‘after finishing eating’ (which is less attested; \**vandāna peragu* ‘after finishing coming’ is unacceptable).

- ‘He has sat in your house once before (in the past)’  
 d. *avan munnāle oru taḍave enḡiṭṭe paṇam keeṭṭurukkān*  
 he before one time I-with money ask-pa-stat-pr-agr  
 ‘He has asked me for money once before (in the past)’

The sentences in (21) illustrate the third sense (viz., evidential), which say that the event was not observed directly by the speaker. They contrast with parallel sentences without *iru*. The source of the information of the event (i.e. drinking beer, reading the book, eating fish) in (21) in the past is an extrapolation of the speaker from the resulting state of the act observed by the speaker after the act. When *avan* ‘he’ is replaced with *nān* ‘I, the speaker’ there is no scope for extrapolation and the sentences in (21) attest the direct knowledge of the speaker as to the act as well as the resulting state. *iru* in the present tense and the future tense may not express the resulting state, but they state the speaker’s inference of the occurrence of the act by deduction from other facts outside the spoken sentence. This inference could cover the resulting state as well, in which case *iru* is repeated after VbP giving *kuḍiccirundurukkān* ‘has drunk beer / is drunk with beer’ and *kuḍiccirunduruppān* ‘would have drunk beer / would have been drunk with beer’, but not *\*kuḍiccirundurundaan* ‘had drunk beer / was drunk with beer’. To put it differently, when there is no direct knowledge of an act, *iru* must be used as the resulting state is the direct knowledge; if the resulting state is not direct knowledge, *iru* must be repeated. The difference between *iru* in the present tense and future tense is that the future expresses a degree of probability<sup>10</sup>.

- 21a. *avan bīr kuḍiccirundān / kuḍiccirukkān / kuḍicciruppān*  
 he beer drink-pa-stat-pa-agr / drink-pa-stat-pr-agr / drink-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘He was drunk with beer / He is drunk with beer / He may have drunk with beer’  
 b. *avan inda pustagatte paḍiccirundān / paḍiccirukkān / paḍicciruppān*  
 he this book-acc read-pa-stat-pa-agr / read-pa-stat-agr / read-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘He had read this book / He has read this book / He may have read this book’  
 c. *avan mīn sāppitturundān / sāppitturkkān / sāppittiruppān*  
 he fish eat-pa-stat-pa-agr eat-pa-stat-pr-agr eat-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘He had eaten fish / He had eaten fish / He may have eaten fish’

While VbP + *iru* + *iru* is an instance of V-V-V sequence, the question to be answered is whether *iru* is the same light verb that is repeated in its different senses or there is more than one light verb which are homophonous. The light verb *iru* does not occur with the full verb *iru* (22b) in the resulting state sense, but occurs with it in the senses of existential past (22c) and evidential in present and future (22d). The reason is the fact that the light verb *iru* in (22b) is high on a scale of verbhood and is closer to the full verb meaning. Two full verbs<sup>11</sup> or verbs closer in status are not repeated in a VbP + V construction. See, for example, *\*pāttuppāttān* ‘(he) tried seeing’, *\*vanduvandān* ‘(he) continued coming’.

<sup>10</sup> *iru* in future also refers to counter-factual occurrence. (21a), for example, could also mean that his drinking beer could have taken place, but did not for a reason that is not stated.

<sup>11</sup> VbP may be duplicated to express an action repeated many times. This is not a V-V sequence.

3. *avan enne vandu vandu pāttān*  
 he I-acc come-pa come-pa see-pa-agr  
 ‘He came repeatedly to see me’

- 22a. avan tōkyōvule irundān / irukkān / iruppān  
 he Tokyo-loc be-pa-agr / be-pr-agr be-fut-agr  
 ‘He was in Tokyo / He is in Tokyo / He will be in Tokyo’
- b. \*avan tōkyōvule irundurundān / irundurukkān / irunduruppān  
 avan Tokyo-loc be-pa-be-pa-agr be-pa-stat-pr-agr be-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘He had been in Tokyo / He has been in Tokyo / He will have been in Tokyo’
- c. avan munnāle oru taḍave tōkyōvule irundurukkān  
 he before-lco one time Tokyo-loc be-pa-stat-pr-agr
- d. avan tōkyōvule \*irundurundān / irundurukkān / irunduruppān  
 he Tokyo-loc be-pa-stat-pa-agr be-pa-stat-pr-agr be-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘He had been in Tokyo / He has been in Tokyo / He will have been in Tokyo (I guess)’

The light verb *iru* is not negated with (*-le < ille*) in the senses of existential past and evidential<sup>12</sup> in past and present. (The negative form of the past and present is same morphologically). The future cannot obviously have the sense of existential past, but can have the evidential sense. The light verb *iru* is negated in its sense of resulting state in all tenses (23 b-e). These examples have alternate forms (given after =) in past and present, which are formed of by adding *ille* directly to VbP without the light verb *iru*.

- 23a. avan kuḍikkale / avan kuḍikkamāṭṭān  
 he drink-inf-neg)pa&pr) he drink-inf-fut-agr  
 ‘He didn’t drink = is not drinking / He will not drink’
- b. avan kuḍiccirukkale =kuḍiccille / kuḍiccirukkamāṭṭān  
 he drink-pa-stat-inf-neg =drink-pa-neg drink-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘He was not drunk / He will not be drunk’
- c. on caṭṭe kizinjirukkale = kizinjille / kizinjirukkādu  
 your shirt tear-pa-stat-inf-neg = tear-pa-neg tear-pa-stat-fut-agr  
 ‘Your shirt was not torn / Your shirt will not be torn’
- d. avan on vīṭṭule ukkāndurukkale = ukkāndille / ukkāndurukkamāṭṭān  
 he your house-loc sit-pa-stat-inf-neg = sit-pa-neg / sit-pa-stat-inf-fut-agr  
 ‘He was not sitting in your house / He will not be sitting in your house’
- e. avan engiṭṭe paṇam kēṭṭurukkale = \*kēṭṭille / kēṭṭurukkamāṭṭān  
 he I-with money ask-pa-inf-neg ask-pa-neg / ask-pa-inf-fut-agr  
 ‘He will did not have asked me for money / He will not have asked me for money’

<sup>12</sup> I infer that S is possible, but not I do not infer that S. The negative of existential past has a different construction which uses *ille* as the predicate of a sentential subject (3a). It parallels another positive existential past with *unḍu*, a synonym of *iru* (4b).

- 4a. avan bīr kuḍiccadille  
 he beer drink-pa-nom-not  
 ‘He has not drunk beer (in the past)’
- b. avan bīr kuḍiccaduṇḍu  
 he beer drink-pa-nom-is  
 ‘He has drunk beer (in the past)’

In (23a), the speaker is the evidence that the act did not take place and so the non-occurrence is asserted. A linguistic context for using sentences with *iru* in (23b-e) is a temporal clause such as ‘when you asked me’. At the time of asking, neither the act nor the resulting state of the act was true. When there is no *iru* (the alternate sentences in (23b, c, d)), the negative means that there was no resulting state to infer the act and so the act could not be stated to have occurred. The alternate form is not possible with many verbs such *keel* ‘ask’ in (23e). These verbs do not have the option of taking *ille* as the verb of negative state (contrasting with the light verb *iru*) but allow only negation of the light verb *iru* of resulting state. The verbs that allow this option are probably verbs of change of state.

The difference between the two can be seen with the full verb *iru* in (24). The verb of negative state *ille* (24b) replaces the verb of positive state *iru* (24a). The existential verb is negated in (24c). (24b) negates the being of a tree at a place whereas (24c) negates pre-existence of a tree at a place.

- 24a. ange oru maram irukku  
 there a tree be-pr  
 ‘There is a tree there’  
 b. ange maram ille  
 there tree not  
 ‘There is no tree there’  
 c. ange maram irukkale  
 there tree be-inf-neg  
 ‘No tree existed there’

The imperative construction requires the verb that admits agency. *iru* ‘be’ as a full verb can be imperative and so the light verb as long as the bleaching of its sense of *iru* is slight. The light verb elsewhere does not have agency.

- 25a. nī ange iru  
 you there be-imp  
 ‘You be there’  
 b. nī ange ukkānduru  
 you there sit-pa-stat-be-imp  
 ‘You be sitting there’  
 c. ? nī biir kuḍicciru  
 you beer drink-pa-be-imp  
 ‘?You be drunken with beer’  
 d. ?? nī inda pustagatte paḍicciru  
 you this book-acc read-pa-be-imp  
 ‘??You be (well) read of this book’  
 e. \*nī appāgiṭṭe ade kēṭṭuru  
 you father-with it-acc ask-pa-be-imp  
 ‘\*You stay asked of this with father’

Note that (25 b-e) would be good if the VbP + V construction is disjunctive with the addition of

-t̥tu to the VbP. This makes V to be the full verb *iru*, which is shown by the fact that it can have adverbs modifying it.

- 26a. nī ange bīr kuḍicciṭtu iru  
 you there beer drink-pa-com-pa-be-imp  
 ‘You be there having drunk the beer’
- b. nī laybrerile inda pustagatte paḍicciṭtu iru  
 you library-loc this book-acc read-pa-com-pa be-imp  
 ‘You be in the library having read this book’
- c. nī kaḍeleyē appāgiṭṭe ade kēṭṭuṭtu iru  
 you store-loc-emp father-with it-acc ask-pa-com-pa be-imp  
 ‘You be in the store itself having asked the father of it’

This is true also when the verb is inflected for the durative aspect with *kiṭṭuru*, which has the verb *iru*. The sentences in (26) will translate respectively as ‘be drinking beer there, be reading this book in the library and be asking this with father in the store itself’.

The above facts about *iru* are not incompatible with an analysis of it in its three senses as one light verb with one lexical meaning (Steever (2005: 169) takes the meaning to be of location, Lindholm (1969), Schiffman (1969:140), Annamalai (1985:135), Fedson (1981:40) take the meaning to be of state). The different senses of *iru* are explained by the place of this light verb in different structural configurations (Schiffman 1969: 140 and Steever 2005: 168-185) or by the variable status of *iru* as to its verbhood and semantic transparency discussed here and in Annamalai (1985:124-136). The advantage of variability analysis is that it allows *iru* to occur twice in a verb sequence.

The lexical meaning of location for *iru* gets credence from the fact that another verb of posture *keḍa* ‘be lying’ can occur in the place of *iru* to give the sense of lying rather than being<sup>13</sup>. But the light verb *keḍa* does not have the sense of past existence and extrapolation. Its occurrence is restricted in the resulting state sense also with VbPs that do not allow the result of the act to be in the lying posture. The restricted parallel with *keḍa* shows that *iru* in some of its occurrences has lexical status.

- kadavu terandırundadu / terandu keḍandudu  
 door open-pa-stat-pa-agr open-pa-lie-pa-agr  
 ‘The door was open / The door lay open’
- nān tirumbi vantappa eli cetturundudu / cettukkeḍandudu  
 I back come-pa-rel-when die-pa-stat-pa-agr / die-pa-lie-pa-agr  
 ‘When I came back, the rat was dead / was lying dead’
- avan inda pustagatte paḍiccirundaan / \*paḍicckkeḍandān  
 he this book-acc read-pa-stat-pa-agr read-pa-lie-pa-agr  
 ‘He had read this book / \*lay read this book’
- avan ange ukkaandurukkaan /\*ukkaandukeḍakkaan

<sup>13</sup> *kiḍa*, like *iru* but restrictively, becomes semantically distant from its full verb meaning of ‘lie’ to give the meaning of resulting state with the connotation of casualness (similar to the one found in ‘lie around’): *pezeccirundaa* ‘if (I) am alive’ vs. *pezecckkeḍandaa* ‘if (I) happen to be alive’.



he there sit-pa-stat-pr-agr / sit-pa-lie-pr-agr  
'He was sitting there / \* was lying sitting there'

The third light verb with a grammatical function is *kiḍu*. But there is no full verb *kiḍu*; the full verb in formal Tamil is *koḷ* 'hold', whose reflex *ko* is used in colloquial Tamil in the imperative form<sup>14</sup>. The sense of this light verb is that the subject with agency is affected in some way by the act. This light verb is volitional. The inanimate subjects in (27 i, j) perform by an unspecified force, natural or mechanical, which is perceived to act volitionally. Note that (27k) is odd, if not ungrammatical, where the act *niḷ* 'stop' is not perceived that way unless you imagine the rain to play hide and seek with you. It may be seen that the sense of *kiḍu* includes the grammatical sense of reflexive, where the subject and object are co-referential, but goes beyond it in its affectation to include performing the act for comfort, safety etc. It can thus occur with intransitive verbs (Annamalai 1985:114).

- 27a. avan tanne aḍiccikiṭṭān  
he self-acc hit-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'He hit himself'
- b. avan tanakkulle pēsikkiṭṭān  
he self-dat-in talk-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'He talked to himself'
- c. avan tan tambiyooḍe peesikkiṭṭān  
he self brother-with talk-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'He chose to talk to his brother'
- d. avan tan tambiyē piḍiccikkiṭṭān  
he self brother-acc hold-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'He held on to his brother'
- e. avan kadave muḍikkiṭṭān  
he door-acc shut-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'He shut himself behind the door'
- f. avan tanakkulle siriccikkiṭṭān  
he self-dat-in laugh-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'He laughed to himself'
- g. avan marattu meeḷe eerikkiṭṭān  
he tree-obl above climb-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'He climbed on to a tree (for safety)'
- h. avan ammā maḍile paḍuttukkiṭṭān  
he mother lap-loc lie-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'He lied down (cozily) on his mother's lap'
- i. kadavu muḍikkiḍuccu  
door close-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'The door closed by itself'
- j. maze piḍiccikiḍuccu  
rain hol-pa-aff-pa-agr  
'The rain intensified'

<sup>14</sup> The past form this light verb *-ṇḍu* in Brahmin dialect is derivable from the formal Tamil past form of this verb *koṇḍu*.

k.\*māze ninnukkiḍuccu  
 rain stop-pa-aff-pa&agr  
 ‘The rain took a break’

VbP + *kiḍu* is like an inflected verb and looks like a simple predicate. It can nevertheless be categorized as a complex predicate. The verb base is inflected in Tamil, but not the VbP, and so VbP + *kiḍu* is not an instance of inflection. As VbP gets light verbs attached to it, this structure is an SVC. *kiḍu*, however, does not contribute to the argument structure of the predicate and does not admit any complement of its own. Its contribution to the predicate is its constitution with two verbs fused into a unitary predicate. Its potential to make a bi-clausal structure is not realized and the predicate remains mono-clausal. A predicate can be mono-clausal with one of its constituent verbs not admitting arguments on its own and so can be a CP.

#### Polar opposite of a grammatical light verb

The polar opposite of *kiḍu* ‘hold’ is *kuḍu* ‘give’, which is high in verbhood and semantic transparency, unlike *kiḍu*. This is borne out by the fact that *taa* ‘give’ the synonym of *kuḍu*, can substitute *kuḍu* in (28). It shares arguments with the full verb and merges its arguments with the arguments of the full verb. It may not share the arguments of the full verb depending on its meaning. The sense of this light verb is the act is performed to be of help to the recipient in the sentence expressed in the dative case.

The object *kār* ‘car’ in (28a) is the object of both the full verb and the light verb. The object pay ‘bag’ in (28b) is the object of the light verb but not the full verb; the locative pay ‘bag’ is the locative of the light verb, but not the full verb. Either one can be used in this sentence. In both these sentences, the indirect object ‘him’ is the recipient of the object as well as the help implied by the light verb. These two sentences will have the same indirect object as the recipient of the object without the light verb *kuḍu* ‘give’ and the indirect object will be glossed ‘for him’. The contribution of *kuḍu* in (28a, b) is the sense that the indirect object is also the recipient of help from the subject. In (28 c, d), on the other hand, the indirect object is not the recipient of the object; the recipient is unspecified. The indirect object is the recipient of the help, which is the abstract unspecified direct object of the di-transitive light verb *kuḍu*.

- 28a. nān avanukku kār vaangikkuḍuttēn  
 I he-dat car buy-pa-ben-pa-agr  
 ‘I bought him a car / I helped him buy a car’
- b. nān avanukku payle / payye pazatte pōṭṭukkuḍuttēn  
 I he-dat bag-loc / nag-acc fruit / acc drop-pa-ben-pa-agr  
 ‘I put the fruits in the bag by way of help and handed it over’
- c. nān avanukku kāre vittukkuḍuttēn  
 I he-dat car-acc sell-pa-ben-pa-agr  
 ‘I helped him sell his car’
- d. nān avanukku kaḍidam ezutikkuḍuttēn  
 I he-dat letter write-pa-ben-pa-agr  
 I wrote the letter for him (by way of help)’

Note that in (29) the full verb and the light verb have a different relationship. It is a relationship where *kuḍu* is a full verb and the verb of VbP describes the manner or condition in which the object is given. The manner is ‘gave the meat chewed’ in (29a) and ‘\*gave the meat eaten’ in (29a). Since the object is made non-existent by eating in (29a) and there is no object for the verb *kuḍu* ‘give’, this sentence is ungrammatical. This relationship of manner is possible in (28a,b) also where buying and putting respectively could describe how the car and fruit respectively came to be given; these manner forms can be contrasted with *tiruḍi* ‘stealing’ and *cutti* ‘wrapping’ respectively.

- 29a. ammā piḷlekku kariye      mennu kuḍuttā  
 mother child-dat meat-acc munch-pa give-pa-agr  
 ‘Mother gave the child meat chewing it’  
 b. \*ammā piḷlekku kariye      tinnu kuḍuttā  
 mother child-dat meat-acc eat-pa give-pa-agr  
 ‘\*Mother gave the child meat eating it’

While *kuḍu* in (29) is a semantically transparent full verb requiring a set of arguments of its own, it could be semantically opaque enabling it to create a new word. It is a light verb in the VbP + *kuḍu* structure that lexicalizes the mono-clause when bleached semantically. *taḍavu* ‘rub’, *taṭṭu* ‘tap’ and *sollu* ‘say’ with *kuḍu* ‘give help’ in (30) give respectively the lexicalized meanings ‘massage’, ‘pat’ and ‘teach’. Note that the bleached light verb *kuḍu* does not admit indirect object as the recipient of help in (30a, b) but has a direct object. This light verb is part of a lexical word without any predicational property of its own. The indirect object in (30c) is the one assigned by the verb *sollu* ‘say’.

- 30a. nān avan muduge      taḍavikuḍuttēn  
 I he-gen back-acc rub-pa-ben-pa-agr  
 ‘I massaged his back (in appreciation)’  
 b. nān nallā paḍiccadukku      avane taṭṭikuḍuttēn  
 I well study-pa-nom-dat he-acc tap-pa=ben-pa-agr  
 ‘I patted him for having studied well’  
 c. nān avanukku tamiz collikuḍuttēn  
 I he-dat Tamil say-pa-ben-pa-agr  
 ‘I taught him Tamil’

VbP + *kuḍu* is a good case of CP, which is mono-clausal and has a combined argument structure. Further, it could be lexicalized.

There is another light verb *viḍu* / (v)uḍu ‘let’ (which is homophonous with the light verb *viḍu*, truncated to *-ḍu*, discussed above) with a sense similar to the light verb sense of *kuḍu*, but highlights the fact that the help is to carry out, for another person, a task that is desired and helpful (31a) or to carry out a task that is for another person relieving (30b) or informing (30c) or making to realize a folly (30d).

- 31a. ammā piḷḷekku caṭṭe pōṭṭuvuṭṭā<sup>15</sup>  
 mother child-dat shirt put-pa-hel-pa-agr  
 ‘Mother put on the shirt for the child’
- b. ammā en caṭṭeye āṇileruntu eḍuttuvuṭṭā<sup>16</sup>  
 mother my shirt-acc nail-abl take-pa-hel-pa-agr  
 ‘Mother took of my shirt for me from the nail’
- c. ammā piḷḷekku pazam kuḍuttuvuṭṭā  
 mother child-dat fruit give-pa-hel-pa-agr  
 ‘Mother sent fruits for the child’
- d. ammā piḷḷeye nallā kēṭṭuvuṭṭā  
 mother child-acc well ask-pa-hel-pa-agr  
 ‘Mother asked the child (to shame him)’

VbP + *viḍu* is an SVC obviously and is a CP in which the light verb can have its own argument. In (32a), the object faucet is the object of *tera* ‘open’ is the faucet, but in (32b), the object water is the object of *viḍu* ‘let’. But this structure does not have lexical integrity, as (32a) shows.

- 32a. ammā kozāye teranduvuṭṭā  
 mother faucet-acc open-pa-let-pa-agr  
 ‘Mother opened the faucet (for the water to run)’
- b. ammā taṇṇiye teranduvuṭṭā  
 mother water-acc open-pa-let-pa-agr  
 ‘Mother let the water run opening (the faucet)’
- c. ammā kozāye terandu taṇṇiye vuṭṭā  
 mother faucet-acc open-pa water-acc let-pa-agr  
 ‘Mother opened the faucet and let the water run’

In terms of their syntactic properties, the light verbs *kuḍu* ‘help’ and *viḍu* ‘let happen’ are similar to the semi-light verbs *pār* ‘try see’ and *kāṭṭu* ‘try to cause to see’ and the attitudinal light verbs *vay*, *pooḍu*, *tole*, *kizi*, *azu*. The VbP with which these light verbs sequence could duplicate to give the meaning of multiple (repeated) occurrences of the act. This is not possible with the VbP with which the grammatical light verbs sequence.

### VbP as an explicator

In the V-V sequences discussed above, V<sub>1</sub>, which takes the form of VbP, is the full verb semantically and syntactically and V<sub>2</sub> is the light verb. In the following sequences, V<sub>1</sub>, which is likewise in the form of VbP, is a full verb semantically but not syntactically, and V<sub>2</sub> is a full verb semantically and syntactically. V<sub>1</sub> is semantically transparent, but it does not have temporal

<sup>15</sup> If the occurrence asserting light verb (*viḍu*) is used in place of the light verb *viḍu* in this sentence, it would mean that the mother has done the job of putting the shirt on the child, and not what this sentence means: the mother helped the child by putting on the shirt on her, which she could not do or was not doing herself.

<sup>16</sup> If the light verb *kuḍu* is used in place of *viḍu* in this sentence, it would mean that the mother helped the child by taking the shirt from the nail (which she could not reach), and not what this sentence means: the mother relieved the shirt from the nail for the child (in which it had entangled), which the child could not do or was not doing herself.

precedence relation with V<sub>2</sub>, but has modifier relationship. In other words, V<sub>1</sub> enriches the meaning of V<sub>2</sub> in the following examples like V<sub>2</sub> (the light verb) enriches the meaning of V<sub>1</sub> in the earlier examples. Thus in Tamil there is no single direction of verb enrichment or complexity addition in a V-V sequence. The enrichment includes the manner in which the act is performed (33a, b) and atomizing the components of the act (33c, d)

This sequence is an SVC, as it is mono-clausal. It is a CP as well because its referential semantic complexity matches with its lexical complexity. The sequence may take complements (33a) or each verb in the sequence may take their own complements (V<sub>1</sub> in 33b, V<sub>2</sub> in 33c). The VbP can be duplicated in (33a, b) to express intensity of manner.

- 33a. avan romba nēram enne uttu-p pāttān  
 he much time I-acc be close-pa see-pa-agr  
 ‘He stared at me for a long time’
- b. avan nenju kulunga vimmi azudān  
 he chest shake-inf sob-pa cry-pa-agr  
 ‘He cried sobbed so his chest shook’
- c. avan enne kīze piḍiccu taḷḷunān  
 he I-acc down hold-pa push-pa-agr  
 ‘He pushed me down holding me’
- d. avan enne mēle pōgāma taḍuttu niruttunān  
 he I-acc above go-not block-pa stop-pa-agr  
 ‘He stopped me from going forward by blocking me’

Other examples of V<sub>1</sub> describing the manner or a component of the act include the following. Contiguity of the verbs is not a requirement in these sentences. This fact and the fact that V<sub>1</sub> in some sentences takes clausal complements (e.g. 34c) do not rule out the possibility that the sequences could be bi-clausal and so they are not SVC.

- 34a. avan tirumbi vandaan  
 he turn-pa come-pa-agr  
 ‘He came back’
- b. avan nimindu ukkāndān  
 he straighten-pa sit-pa-agr  
 ‘He sat up’
- c. avan taleye kuninju pāttān  
 he head-acc bend-pa see-pa-agr  
 ‘He looked down bending his head’
- d. avan engiṭṭerundu taḷḷi ukkaandān  
 he I-abl move-pa sit-pa-agr  
 ‘He sat away from me’
- e. avan kīze mayangi vizundān  
 he down faint-pa fall-pa-agr  
 ‘He fell down fainted / He fainted’
- f. avan dōseye rasiccu sāppiṭṭān  
 he dose-acc enjoy-pa eat-pa-agr

- ‘He ate the dose enjoying / He enjoyed dose’  
 g. *avan toḍndu peesunaan*  
 he continue-pa speak-pa-agr  
 ‘He spoke continuously /  
 He continued to speak’

Some of these sequences are lexicalized. For example, *uttu* in (33a) does not occur as a verb with any other inflection such as *\*uttān* ‘(he) was close’. But most  $V_1$  do: *vimmunān* ‘(he) sobbed’ etc. This V-V sequence has commonness with lexical compound verbs in Japanese (Matsumoto 1996: 197ff), which are defined as two verbs which do not have their own arguments independent of each other when they are sequenced. (34c) does not fit with this definition, which has *tale* ‘head’ as the argument of  $V_1$  but not of  $V_2$ , which could have another argument *tare* ‘floor’ Whether this is a definitional problem bears further scrutiny when *kuninju pār* in *tareye kuninju pāttān* ‘(he) looked down at the floor’ is treated as lexicalized but *tareye taleye kuninju pāttān* ‘(he) looked at the floor head-down’ is not.

Another set of such verb sequences has a generic verb such as deictic verbs as  $V_2$ ;  $V_1$  in these sequences adds specification of meaning. These are similar to manner sequences described above, but  $V_2$  does not add anything to the meaning of the sequence other than the direction of movement. The manner of movement is expressed in  $V_1$ . Note that in (35c, d) there are two VbPs and the second of them is *kiṭṭu*, which is the VbP of the light verb *kiḍu* discussed earlier. This adds a sense of simultaneous act to the manner.

- 35a. *avan naḍandu pōnān*  
 he walk-pa go-pa-agr  
 ‘He went walking / on foot’  
 b. *avan oḍi vandān*  
 he run-pa come-pa-agr  
 ‘He came running’  
 c. *avan noḍikkiṭṭu vandān*  
 he limp-pa-aff-pa come-pa-agr  
 ‘He came limping’  
 d. *avan kudiccukkiṭṭu pōnān*  
 he jump-pa-aff-pa go-pa-agr  
 ‘He went jumping (in joy)’

The verb sequence with *kiṭṭu* (or its equivalent *koṇḍu*) preceded by certain full verbs and followed by deictic verbs give rise to lexical items as in (36). This is similar to the complex motion predicates in Japanese (Matsumoto 1996: 237ff) with some differences that need to be explored.

- 36a. *avan paṇam koṇḍuvandān / pōnān*  
 he money hold-pa-com-pa-agr / go-pa-agr  
 ‘He came / went holding the money’  
 = ‘He brought in / took out money’

- b. avan pustagatte eduttukkiṭṭu vandān / pōnān  
 he book-acc take-pa-aff-pa come-pa-agr / go-pa-agr  
 ‘He came / went taking the money’  
 = ‘He carried in / out the money’
- c. avan tambiyē kūṭṭikkiṭṭu vandān / pōnān  
 he brother-acc accompany-pa-aff-pa come-pa-agr / go-pa-agr  
 ‘He came / went accompanying his brother’  
 = He brought in / away his brother’
- d. avan tambiyē azecckuṭṭu vandān / pōnān  
 he brother-acc invite-pa-aff-pa come-pa-agr / go-pa-agr  
 ‘He came in / went out inviting his brother with him’  
 = ‘He took in / took out his brother’
- e. avan tambiyē tūkkikkiṭṭu vandān / pōnān  
 he brother-acc lift-pa-aff-ap come-pa-agr / go-pa-agr  
 ‘He came in / went out carrying his brother’

The above sequence is different from the constructions below, where the VbP bears a case relationship with the predicate. They are not instances of V-V sequence. Note, however, that they are drawn from a finite set of verbs similar to the light verbs.

- 37a. avan enne pāṭṭu siriccān  
 he I-acc see-pa laugh-pa-agr  
 ‘He laughed at me’
- b. avan pazatte kattiye vaccu veṭṭunān  
 he fruit-acc knife-acc keep-pa cut-pa-agr  
 ‘He cut the fruit with / holding a knife’
- c. avan cikāgōvulerundu pēsūrān  
 he Chicago-be-pa speak-pr-agr  
 ‘He is speaking from Chicago’

There is no space here to discuss the possibilities of sequencing of two or more light verbs and the possibilities of light verbs occurring in non-finite verb forms. The general fact of the former is that there is a hierarchical order among the light verbs and that the grammatical light verbs follow other light verbs, but not vice versa. With regard to the latter, the grammatical light verbs acquire a different, but a related, sense when they are in VbP position while all other light verbs do not differ semantically from full verbs when they occur in non-finite forms.

### Conclusion

V-V sequences that form a Serial Verb Construction or a Complex Predicate in Tamil show a variety of relationships between them and the light verbs (V<sub>2</sub>) perform a variety of functions, which are not strictly grammatical. Structurally, V-V sequences have a range from being flexible in the contiguity of verbs to uninterrupted morphological forms. These properties have been observed across languages. This paper shows that they are found within the same language. The

light verbs have a range in a scale of verbal status and semantic transparency. This shows the dynamic nature of the light verbs in Tamil. The dividing line between full verbs and light verbs may be fuzzy in Tamil as a class and in their specific sequencing questioning the validity of setting up a separate grammatical category of light verbs in Tamil (Butt 2010:59). Semantically transparent  $V_1$  in the V-V sequence may play a secondary role syntactically like the semantically bleached light verbs that are  $V_2$ . This expands the definition of a serial verb construction to include V-V sequence where  $V_1$  specifies the manner of performing an act or the semantic components of an act. For all the V-V sequences discussed in the paper to qualify as complex predicates, the definition of the complex predicate must be relaxed of its requirement that the verbs have the same or different arguments that are merged into one argument structure of a unitary predicate. The unitary predicate may be a lexical composite and one of its verbs may not assign any arguments.

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