

## The Variable Relation of Verbs in Sequence in Tamil

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### Abstract

Tamil is a verb final and verb centric language, which allows a sequence of verbs, of which the last verb is finite, which agrees with the subject and the rest of the verbs are non-finite without agreement, but inflected for other grammatical features.

- 1 a. nān avane paḍikka vaccēn  
I he-acc read-inf place-pa-agr  
I made him read
- b. nān ade paḍiccu muḍiccēn  
I it-acc read-pa finish-pa-agr  
I finished reading it
- c. nān ade paḍiccirukkēn  
I it-acc read-pa-be-pr-agr  
I have read it

One of the non-finite forms of the verb is of the form of verb base and past tense suffix as in (1b) and (1c) and it is named verbal participle. This paper is about the relationship between the verbs in a sequence in their participial form and finite form. The finite form of the verb may a light verb, which expresses grammatical notions such as aspect and mood as well as speaker perceptions of the event whether the proposition is evidential, has anticipated relevance, is not to the liking etc. These light verbs are semantically bleached, though not to the uniform degree. This paper examines the syntactic integrity and semantic homogeneity of this V-V structure and shows that it is mono-clausal contrasting with the structure of V-V in (1a), which is infinitive + light verb. The paper also shows that the light verbs make a cline of verbhood.

There are V-V structures of verbal participle + light verb, where the first verb in the sequence does not have the same status as the second one and has a modifying function, not the conjunctive function of the verbal participle.

- 2 a. nān nimintu ukkāndēn  
I straighten-pa sit-pa-agr  
I sat up
- b. nān ukkāndu paḍiccēn  
I sit-pa read-pa-agr  
I read sitting

This paper discusses the syntactic and semantic properties of this V-V structure and examines if it is a mono-clausal structure. It aims to show that the internal structure of the V-V sequence constituting a complex predicate could be varied in a single language.

This paper aims to show the dynamics of the relation between the verbs that occur in sequence, which bears on grammaticalization of words and the pragmatic effects on the use of words in syntactic contexts.