III .1. Phonemic inventory

The Tamil that is currently in use in the Nagappattinam district spoken by various speech communities is referred as the Nagapattinam speech Tamil. There are twenty-three segmental phonemes and one suprasegmental phoneme. They are five short vowels and eighteen consonants. Since all the five short vowels contrast with their corresponding long vowels, a co-occurring feature of the short vowels. By this process ten vowels, five short and five long can be reduced to six phonemes, i.e. five segmental vowel phonemes of having quality difference and one suprasegmental phoneme, viz., length which can be marked by ′/. Long consonants have been analysed as geminate consonants, due to syllable division.

III .1.1. Vowels:

All the five vowels are classified on the basis of height and the advancement of the tongue, viz., high, higher-mid, and low and front, central and back.

Advancement of the tongue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Front</th>
<th>CenTral</th>
<th>Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i:</td>
<td>u</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>u:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher-mid</td>
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<td>e:</td>
<td>o</td>
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<td>o:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
III .1.2. Consonants

All the eighteen consonants are classified on the basis of the articulators and manner of articulation. On the basis of the articulators, they are classified into six viz. labial, dental, alveolar, retroflex (domal), palatal and velar. The labials are /p, m, v/, and the dental is /t/. The alveolars are /n, l, r, r/. The retroflexes are /T, N, S, L/ and the palatals are /c, j, n, l, y/. The velar is /k/. On the basis of the manner of articulation all the eighteen consonants are classified into seven groups viz. stops, nasals, fricatives, laterals, flap, Trill and semivowels or glides. The stop phonemes are /p, T, T, c, j, k/. The nasal phonemes are /m, n, n, / and /h/. The fricative phoneme is /s/. The lateral phonemes are /l, L, l/. The flap phoneme is /r/ and the Trill phoneme is /r/. The semivowels or glides are /y/ and /v/.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Labial</th>
<th>Dental</th>
<th>Alveolar</th>
<th>Hetroflex</th>
<th>Palatal</th>
<th>Velar</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stop</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>C (j)*</td>
<td>k</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fricitive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(s)*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lateral</td>
<td></td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>L</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flap</td>
<td>R</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trill</td>
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<td>r</td>
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<tr>
<td>Semi-vowel</td>
<td>V</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Y</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* /j/ and /s/ are marginal phonemes.

Since there is a stop phoneme in the stop phonemic series under palatal columnn and there are no other affricates except palatal affricates,
they are treated phonemically as palatal stops in order to maintain the neatness of pattern and pattern congruity. The voiced palatal stop / j / is treated as a marginal phoneme though it contrasts with its corresponding voiceless stop / c / in the initial position, it occurs only in the borrowed words, and that too only in a few words in the initial and medial positions.

They are: /jo:Ti/ 'pair'

/ ja:Ti/ 'flower pot'

/ja:iTi alavu ko:l/ 'mesarment tool in carpenter'

/pajji /> /pacci/ 'name of a dish'

Another marginal phoneme is the fricative /s/. It is also used only in borrowed words. It has very limited occurrence and that too in the medial position, intervocally and before a retroflex stop. It is defective in its distributional and therefore it is analysed here as a marginal phoneme; like the palatal stop / j /. Though there is no real contrast between / c / and / j / in the medial position, it is considered as a marginal one since in the intervocal position, the stop phonemes have either lax allophones (fricative) or tense i.e. double stop.

So, if the palatal voiced stop is treated as a separate phoneme, it violates the general behaviour of the speech of occupational dialects. But the phone [j] in the post nasal position is treated as the allophone of /c/ because the other stop phones occur in the post nasal positions are treated as the allophones of the phonemes / p T t k / respectively. The author of the present work also found in the course of the analysis of the speech of occupational dialects that the natives did not feel that the post nasal stops are different from the stops elsewhere.
III .1.3. Suprasegmental phoneme

In the occupational terms of Tamil, there is only one suprasegmental phoneme viz., length.

Length is symbolized as / : /. All the five short vowel phonemes have quantitative (length) contrast. Since the study of intonation pattern is beyond the scope of this present work, other suprasegmental features in sentence level like pitch, intensity, etc. are not dealt with.

III .2. Phonemic contrasts

The phonemes have been identified on the basis of their contrasts in their distribution. Both the minimal and subminimal pairs as contrasts are taken into account to identify and establish the phonemes.

III .1. Vowels

All the vowels maintain the qualitative as well quantitative contrasts initially and medially. In the final position /a / and / o / do not maintain the quantitative contrasts in the final position.

III .2.1.1. Qualitative contrast

Qualitative contrast is based on the shape of the oral cavity modulated by the tongue and the lip posture. The phonemes are described on the basis of the x contrasting z features. /I , e / high front short vowel and mid front short vowel respectively.

/ i, e /
/ itu / ‘that’
/ eTu / ‘take’
/ ti / ‘role’
/tera/  ‘open’
/viri/  ‘unfold’
/vera/  ‘seed’

/i,a/
/i/ high front short vowel
/a/ Low central short vowel
/iTi/  ‘pound’
/aTi/  ‘beat’
/maTi/  ‘fold’
/miti/  ‘step on’

/i,o/
/i/ High front short vowel
/o/ Back mid short vowel
/iTi/  ‘hit’
/oTi/  ‘break’
/puTi/  ‘catch’
/poTi/  ‘powder’

/i,u/
/i/ high ront short vowel
/u/ High back short vowel
/ilu/  ‘pull’
/ulu/  ‘plough’
/kili/  ‘tear’
/kuli/  ‘tich’
/e,a/

/e/ Mid front short vowel

/a/ Central low short vowel

/ele/ ‘to polish’

/ale/ ‘meshar’

/kele/ ‘branch’ -----

/kale/ ‘weed’, ‘to micks’

/e,o/

/e/ Front mid short vowel

/o/ Back mid short vowel

/eTe/ ‘wight’

/oTe/ ‘to break’

/keTe/ ‘flock herd’

/koTe/ ‘scoop out’

/e,u/

/e/ Front mid short vowel

/u/ Back high short vowel

/ele/ ‘eaf’

/ulu/ ‘to plough’

/melugu/ ‘wax’

/mulukku/ ‘immerse’

/pa:le/ ‘flower of coconut’

/pa:lu/ ‘milk’
/a,o/
/a/ Low central short vowel
/o/ Mid back short vowel
  /ale/ ‘mesarmentl’
  /ole/ ‘mire’
  /pati/ ‘to fiks’
  /poti/ ‘load’
/a,u/
/a/ Low central short vowel
/u/ High back short vowel
  /ari/ ‘boundle of harvest hay’
  /uri/ ‘a rope net suspended roof for keeping vessels with milk butter etc’
  /kali/ ‘clay’
  /kuli/ ‘tiche’
/o,u/
/o/ Mid back short vowel
/u/ High back short vowel
  /otte/ ‘same’
  /utti/ ‘idea’
  /pone/ ‘join’
  /punna:kku/ ‘oil-cake’
/i,e,a,o,u/
/i/iTi/ ‘thunder’
/o/oTi/ ‘break’
III.2.1.2. QUANTITATIVE CONTRAST

Quantitative contrast is based on the duration of the sounds. All the five short vowels contrast with their corresponding long vowels.

/ɪ,ɪː/
/ɪ/ High front short vowel
/ɪː/ High front long vowel

/iTukki/ ‘Tweezhar’
/i:TTi/ ‘spear’
/piTi/ ‘catch’
/pi:Ti/ ‘brown sisser’
/katti/ ‘knife’
/ti:/ ‘fire’

/e,eː/
/e/ Mid front short vowel
/eː/ Mid front long vowel

/ene/ ‘join’
/e:ne/ ‘kind of hammock for babies to sleep in’
/vele/ ‘price’
/ve:le/ ‘work’
/pe:/ ‘ghost’
/a, a:/
/a/ Low central short vowel
/a:/ Low central long vowel
/alu/ ‘weep’
/a:lom/ ‘depth’
/vattalu/ ‘boat’
/va:ttu/ ‘duck’
/o, o:/
/o/ Mid back short vowel
/o:/ Mid back long vowel
/koTe/ ‘gift’
/ko:Te/ ‘summer’
/koTi/ ‘climber’
/ko:Ti/ ‘carner’
/oTe/ ‘to break’
/o:Te/ ‘teach’
/ole/ ‘ove’
/o:le/ ‘palm leaf or coconut’
/pone/ ‘join’
/po:Ni/ ‘first sale’
/u,u:/
/u/ High back short vowel
/u:/ High back long vowel

/umi/ ‘hush’
/u:me/ ‘dumb’
/u:tu/ ‘house’
/uTu/ ‘leave’

/u,u:/
/puTTu/ ‘rice dish’
/pu:TTu/ ‘lock’
/uppu/ ‘salt’
/pu:/ ‘flower’

III .2.2. CONSONANTS

All the consonants in the occupational terms of Tamil do not occur in all the three positions and therefore the contrasts in pairs are not given for all the positions. Even the nasals /m/ and /n/ which occur in all the positions could not be placed in contrastive pairs with other nasals in all the positions. So, in certain cases the subminimal pairs are taken into consideration for giving phonemic status.

III .2.2.1. Qualitative contrasts

/p,v/

/p/ Labial voice stop

/v/ Labio dental voiced semi-vowel

/pa:Tu/ ‘one catch’

/va:Tu/ ‘calm sea’
/appa:/ ‘father’
/vavva:/ ‘bat’

/t/,/T/
/t/ Dental voiceless stop
/T/ Retroflex voiceless stop (domal)
/tinu/ ‘eat’ (tunnu)
/Tinu/ ‘tin
/katti/ ‘knife’
/kaTTi/ ‘unshped clay boule’
/nettili/ ‘name of a fish’
/neTTima:le/
/pattu/ ‘ten’
/paTTu/ ‘silk’

/c,/j/
/c/ Palatal voiceless stop
/j/ Palatal voiced stop
/co:Ti/ ‘decorate’
/jo:Ti/ ‘pair’
/pacci/ ‘birds’
/pajji/ ‘name of a dish’

/p,/k/
/p/ Bilabial voiceless stop
/k/ Velar voiceless stop
/pa:ru/ ‘the way through which the cattle goes during water-lifting’
/ka:ru/  ‘the first crop of paddy harvested in the rainy’
/pa:lkTTu/ ‘half stage of forming milk in the ear of corn’
/ka:lpTi/  ‘one fourth measurement of grains’

/m,n/

/m/ Bilabial voiced nasal
/n/ Alveolar voiced nasal

/maNNu/  ‘soil’
/ma:ttu/ ‘to change’
/na:ttu/  ‘seedling’
/marom/  ‘tree’
/nerom/  ‘color’
/amma:/  ‘mother’
/annen/  ‘elder brother’

/m,n/

/m/ Bilabial voiced nasal
/n/ Retroflex(domal) voiced nasal

/m,n/

/ma:mi/  ‘aunty’
/mani/  ‘bell’
/ammi/  ‘’
/aNNi/  ‘’
/m,n/
/m/ Bilabial voiced nasal
/n/ Palatal voiced nasal
/kampi/ ‘fish-bait’
kanci/ ‘gruel’
a:manakku/ ‘garlik’
ainu:ru/ ‘five hundred’

/m,n,n,N/
/ma:TTu/ ‘to ficks’
/na:TTu/ ‘to suport’
/unni/ ‘parasite’
/ainnu:ru/ ‘five hundred’
anpu/ ‘love’
antu/ ‘’

/m,n/
/m/ Bilabial voiced nasal
/n/ Palatal voiced nasal
/ma:ttu/ ‘to change’
/na:ttu/ ‘seedling’

/n,N/
/n/ Alveolar voiced nasal
/N/ Palatal voiced nasal
/na:nayom/ ‘’
/ma:Niyom/ ‘discound’
/l,l/

/l/ Alveolar voiced lateral

/la:Tom/ ‘zoo’

/l/ Retroflex(domal) voiced lateral

/ka:li/ ‘empty’

/ka:li/ ‘Goddess akli’

/palli/ ‘lizard’

/palli/ ‘a sect of harijan’

/vello/ ‘jaggary’

/vellom/ ‘flood’/’water’

/va:lu/ ‘tail’

/va:lu/ ‘sword’

/l,l/

/l/ Alveolar voiced lateral

/l/ Palatal groove fricativised lateral

/va:lu/ ‘tail’

/va:lu/ ‘live’

/l,L,l/

/kolom/ ‘sect’

/koLom/ ‘lake’

/kolampu/ ‘sauce’

/r,r/

/r/ Alveolar voiced fnap

/r/ Alveolar voiced trill

/ra:tri/ ‘night’
III .2.2. Quntitative contrasts:

All the consonants do not have quantitative contrast in this dialect. The following x consonants /s,r,l,r/ do not have quantitative contrast. The other consonants have such contrasts in the medial position.

/p,pp/
/a:ppu/ ‘big size wooden pin’
/appu/ ‘bulack cart centre frame’

/t,tt/
/ka:tu/ ‘ear’
/ka:ttu/ ‘wind’

/T,TT/
/puTi/ ‘handle’
/pu:TTu/ ‘lack’

/k,kk/
/kokki/ ‘pin’
/kokku/ ‘crane’
The occupational terms of Tamil have both oral and naslized vocoids. The vocoids in general are classified on the basis of height of the tongue, advancement of the tongue and lip posture. On the basis of the height of the tongue they are classified into six viz. high, lower high, higher mid, mean mid, lowmid, and low. On the basis of advancement of the tongue they are classified into three viz. front, central, and back. On the basis of the posture of the lips, they are classified into two, viz., rounded and unrounded.
In the occupational terms of Nagappattinam Tamil, the glides can be treated as automatic features which occur as initiators to the initial vocoids. The front vocoids will have the palatal onglide and the low vocoids have the glottal on-glide of a very slight nature. Since, these initiators respectively occur in the initial position with all the vocoids they are predictable, so, they are automatic. This way they are treated in this analysis as non-contrastive elements. The nasalized vocoids are treated as di-phonemic units where nasalization has been analysed as an allophone of nasal consonants and the vocoids as allophones of vowels. As there is no final nasal in the speech of fishermen, the nasalization of vocoids can be treated as allophones of consonants without any difficulty.

[v] will be phonemically become as seqwuence of /VN/ . One phonetic unit is realized as two phonemes.

1.3.3.1. Allophonic distribution

/ɪ/ High front short vowel has three allophones:[ii][I][i].

[ii] High front unrounded short vocoid with palatal on-glide occurs initially.

[innIkki] /innikki/ ‘to-today’

[i] Lower-high front unrounded short vocoid occurs medially between two consonanats.

[mInnaL] /minnalu/ ‘lightning’

[i] High front unrounded short vocoid occurs elsewhere.

[pITi] /puTi/ ‘catch’
/i:/ High front long vowel has two allophones [i:] [i:].

[i:] high front long unrounded vocoid with palatal on-glide occurs initially.

[i:i:Tt] /i:Tt/ ‘spear’

[i:] high front long unrounded vocoid occurs elsewhere.

[ti:] /ti:/ ‘fire’

/e/ Higher-mid short unrounded front vowel has three allophones: [I e], [E], [E].

[i] Higher-mid front short vocoid with palatal on-glide occurs initially.

[i eli] /eli/ ‘rat’

[I eppe] /eppe/ ‘when’

[E] Mean-mid front short unrounded vocoid occurs medially between two consonants.

[p nImEtte] /panimette/ ‘ice-house’

[kel pp] /kelappu/ ‘start’

[e] Lower-mid front short unrounded vocoid occurs elsewhere.


/e:/ Front higher mid long vowel has two allophones: [ie:], [e:]

[ie:] Front, higher mid long unrounded vocoid with palatal on-glide occurs initially.

[ie:tti] /e:ttu/ ‘load’
[me:yi] /me:yi/ ‘grase’

/a/ Low, central short vowel has only one allophone[^]

[^] Back, low mid short unrounded vocoid occurs initially, and medially. When it occurs medially there is no on-glide but in the initial position, it has slight glottal on-glide which is not a contrastive feature in this dialect. It is an automatic predictable element.

[^mmUkUtti] /ammukutti/ ‘fish-knife’

[^le] /ale/ ‘wave’

[t^la:] /ala:/ ‘oar’

/a:/ Low, central unrounded long vowel has only one allophone [a:]

[a:] Low, central long unrounded vocoid occurs in all the three positions, viz. initial, medial and final.

[a:l] /a:lom/ ‘depth’

[pa:ri] /pa:ru/ ‘see’

[va:] /va:/ ‘come’

/o/ Back, rounded mid short vowel has three allophones

[uo],

[uo] back, rounded mid short vocoid with labio-velar on-glide occurs initially.

[uol^kke] /olakke/ ‘pestle’

[uori] /oTi/ ‘break’
Back, rounded mean-mid short vocoid occurs medially between two consonants.

[k TT:] /koTTa:/ ‘shed’

[m e^li] /motalu/ ‘capital’

Back, rounded lower mid short vocoid with nasalization occurs finally. (The nasalization is treated as a nasal consonant).

[p^l] /palom/ ‘fruit’

[k s^v] /kocavpm/ ‘saree frills’

/o:/ Back, rounded mid long vowel has two allophones [uo:], [o:].

[uo:] Back, rounded mid long vocoid with labio-velar on-glide occurs initially.

[uo:le] /o:le/ ‘palm-lead’

[uo:TTe] /o:TTe/ ‘hole’

[o:] Back, rounded mid long vocoid occurs elsewhere.

[po:] /po:/ ‘go’

[to:pp] /to:ppu/ ‘grove’


/u/ Back, rounded high short vowel has three allophones [u u], [u], [t].

[u u ] Back, rounded high short vocoid with labio-velar on-glide occurs initially.

[u ur] /uTu/ ‘leave’

[u uupi] /uppu/ ‘salt’
[u] Back, rounded lower high short vocoid occurs in the initial syllable between two consonants.

[tull] /tullu/ ‘jump’

[mull] /mullom/ ‘fish bait’

[i] Central, high unrounded short vocoid occurs elsewhere.

[tltrimbi] /tirumpu/ ‘turn’

[va:li] /va:lu/ ‘tail’

[kUri] /kuTu/ ‘give’

/u:/ Back, high rounded long vowel has two allophones [u u:] [u:].

[u u:] Back, long high rounded vocoid occurs with labio-velar on-gliding initially.

[u u:TTi] /u:TTu/ ‘pour’

[u u:tti] /u:ttu/ ‘feed’

[u:] Back, long rounded high vocoid occurs elsewhere.

[pu:TTi] /pu:TTu/ ‘lock’

[du:r ]/tu:rom/ ‘distance’

1.3.2 CONTOIDS

The contoids are classified on the basis of their point of articulation such as labial, dental, alveolar, domal palatal, velar and manner of articulation such as stops, affricates, fricatives, nasals, laterals, flap, trill, and semi-vowels. These contoids are further identified by the vibration of the vocal cords as voiced or its absence as voiceless. They are grouped into
phonemes on the basis of their distributional factor, when occur in complementary positions. The separating procedures identify them as different phonemes, when they occur in contrasting distribution. All the contoids do not occur in all the three positions maintaining contrasts. Therefore, only the contrasts in the limited distribution are given in the minimal and sub-minimal pairs.

III. 3.2.1. Allophonic distribution

\( /p/ \) Labial unaspirated stop phoneme has three allophones:

\[ [p], [b], [\ ] \]

[b] Bilabial voiced unaspirated stop contoid occurs medially after a nasal.

\[ [a:\mble] /a:\mple/ 'male' \]
\[ [t^\mbi] /tampi/ 'younger brother' \]

[B] Bilabial voiced slit fricative contoid occurs medially in intervocalic position and after /l/ and /r/.

\[ [l\a:bm] /l\a:pom/ 'profit' \]
\[ [ma:rb\i] /ma:rp\u/ 'chest' \]
\[ [iyalbi] /iyalpu/ 'nature' \]

[p] Bilabial voiceless unaspirated stop contoid occurs elsewhere.

\[ [pa:] /pa:/ 'mat' \]
\[ [k^\ppe] /kappe/ 'ship' \]
\[ [ma:p\pi] /ma:pp\u/ 'crowd of fish' \]

\( /t/ \) Dental unaspirated stop phoneme has three allophones:

\[ [t], [d], [d] \]
[d] Dental voiced unaspirated stop occurs medially after a nasal.

[sondm ] /contom/ ‘relation’


[p^ndi] /pantu/ ‘ball’

[d] Dental voiced slit fricative contoid occurs medially in intervocalic positions, and after /r/.  


[k^rdi] /kartu/ ‘corn’

[so:di] /co:ti/ ‘test’

[t] Dental voiceless unaspirated contoid occurs elsewhere.

[to:ni] /to:ni/ ‘boat’

[ka:tti] /ka:ttu/ ‘wind’

[m^tte] /matte/ ‘wave’

[t] Domal or retroflex consonant stop phoneme has three allophones:/]
[t],[d],[r].

[d] retroflex voiced stop contoid occurs medially after a nasal or before a voiced flap.

[v^nd^li] /vanTalu/ ‘clay’

[u o:dra:] /o:tra:n/ ‘runs’ (he)

[r] Retroflex flap voiced contoid occurs medially in intervocalic position or after a stop consonant.
[te:ri] /te:Tu/ ‘search’
[ku:pri] /ku:ptu/ ‘call’
[u o:ri] /o:Tu/ ‘run’

[t] retroflex unaspirated voiceless stop contoid occurs elsewhere.

[p^TTe] /paTTe/ ‘bark of a tree’
[p TTi] /poTTi/ ‘box’

[to:TT] /to:TTom/ ‘garden’

/c/ Palatal unaspirated stop phoneme has three allophones

[c], [j], [s]

[s] Alveolar slit voiceless fricative occurs initially medially between vowels and after /l/.

[co:ttivelli] /co:ttuvelli/ ‘evening star’

[vese] /vese/ ‘mechanic’

[j] Palatal voiced affricate contoid occurs medially after a nasal.

[p^njil] /panic/ ‘cotton’

[k^njil] /kanci/ ‘food’

[m^njel] /mance/ ‘turmeric’

[c] Palatal voiceless affricate unaspirated contoid occurs elsewhere.

[p^cce] /pace/ ‘green’

[v^licca:] /valicca:n/ ‘pulled’ (he)
/j/ * Palatal unaspritated (affricate contoid) phoneme (marginal) has only one allophone [j].

[j] Palatal voiced unaspirated contoid affricate occurs initially and medially as geminate where it is in free variation with voiceless stop /cc/, Borrowed words.

[jo:ri] /jo:Tii/ ‘pair’

/j^e/] /jaTe/ ‘a pair’

[p^jji] or [p^cci] /pacci/ or /paji/ ‘name of a dish’

/k/ Velar unaspirated stop phoneme has three allophones: [k], [g], [r].

[g] Velar unaspirated voiced stop contoid occurs medially after a nasal.

[p^nge] /ponke/ ‘to cook’

[s^nng] /canku/ ‘conch’

[r] Velar voiced groove fricative contoid occurs medially between vowels.

[ve:r ] /ve:kom/ ‘speed’

[^r] /akulu/ ‘earthern lamp’

[k] Velar, voiceless unasprimated stop contoid cocurs elsewhere.

[ko:li] /ko:lu/ ‘stick’

[na:kk] /na:kku/ ‘tongue’

[pa:kke] /pa:kke/ ‘to see’

[vEkk ] /vekkom/ ‘shyness’
/s/ Retroflex voiceless groove fricative consonants phoneme has only one allophone [s].

[s] Retroflex voiceless groove fricative contoid occurs medially between vowels and before retroflex stops, i.e. before homorganic stop phoneme.

[vEs] /vesom/ ‘poison.

[ve:s] /ve:son/ ‘disguise’

[k^st] /kasTom/ ‘difficulty’

/m/ Bilabial voiced nasal phoneme has two allophones:

[m], [v]

[v] Nasalization of back vowels (vocoids) which occurs finally with /u/ [~], /o/ [ ] Phonemes.

[vEll ] /vellom/ ‘water’ (flood)

[v^ r ] /varum/ ‘will come’

[m] Bilabial voiced nasal contoid occurs elsewhere.

[m^r ] /marom/ ‘tree’

[^mma:] /amma/ ‘mother’

[ma:mi] /ma:mi/ ‘mother in law’

[t^mbi] /tampi/ ‘younger brother’

/n/ Alveolar voiced nasal has four allophones. They are [n], [n], [n], [v].

[v] Nasalization of vocoids [e],[a:] occurs word finally.
[m^ve] /maven/ ‘son’

[po:na:] /po:na:n/ ‘went (he)’

[ke:tta:] /ketta:n/ ‘asked’ (he)

[n] Dental voiced nasal contoid occurs before dental stop phoneme.

[p^n] /apntu/ ‘ball’

[nga:] /vanta:n/ ‘came’ (he)

[n] Velar voiced nasal contoid occurs medially before a velar stop phoneme.

[p^n] /panku/ ‘share’

[s^n] /canku/ ‘conch’

[n] Alveolar voiced nasal contoid occurs elsewhere.

[na:l] /na:lu/ ‘four’

[s nna:] /conna:n/ ‘told’ (he)

[po:na:] /po:na:/ ‘went’ (She)

[^nb] /anpu/ ‘love’

/n/ palatal voiced nasal phoneme has only one allophone, [n].

[n] palatal voiced nasal contoid occurs initially, medially between vowels and before a palatal stop or nasal.

[na:y] /na:yom/ ‘justice’

[na:yIttkkEl^me] /nayittikkelame/ ‘Sunday’
[^inu:r] /ainu:ru/ ‘five hundred’

[p^nj ] /pancom/ ‘famine’

/n/ Retroflex voiced nasal contoid occurs medially between vowels, before a retroflex stop and also as geminate.

[m^nî] /mani/ ‘bell’

[K^nn] /kannu/ ‘eye’

[v^nî] /vanti/ ‘cart’

/l/ Alveolar voiced lateral phoneme has only one allophone [l].

[l] Alveolar voiced lateral contoid occurs in the initial and medial positions only.

[l^vIkke] /lavikke/ ‘jacket’

[pa:lsra:] /pa:lcra:/ ‘white shark’

[v^le] /vale/ ‘net’

[k^lla:kke] /kalla:kke/ ‘stone anchor’

/l/ Retroflex voiced lateral consonant phoneme has only one allophone[l].

[l] Retroflex voiced lateral contoid occurs only medially as single or as geminate and in consonant cluster. It is in free variation with [l] when it occurs intervocally.

[va:le~va:le] /va:le/ or /va:le/ ‘sword fish’

[v^l^y^l] /valayalu/ or [v^l^y^l] /valayaly/ ‘bangles’

[vElla:pp] /vella:ppu/ ‘flooding’
/l/ Palatal groove lateral fricativized phoneme has only one allophone [l].

[l] palatal lateral groove fricativized contoid occurs only medially.

[p^l] /palom/ ‘fruit’

[k lvi] /kolvi/ ‘pestle stone’

[va:le] /va:le/ ‘plantain’

[kEl^ngi] /kelanki/ ‘root’ (edible)

/r/ Alveolar flap consonant phoneme has only one allophone [r].

[r] Alveolar flap voiced contoid occurs initially and medially.

[ra:tri] /ra:tri/ ‘night’

[pa:r] /pa:ru/ ‘see’

/r/ Alveolar voiced trill consonant phoneme has only one allophone [r].

[r] alveolar voiced trill contoid occurs initially and medially.

[ra:l] /ra:lu/ ‘prawn’

[a:r] /a:ru/ ‘river’

[k^rntra:l] /karuntra:lu/ ‘black prawn’

/v/ Labio-dental semi-vowel phoneme has two allophones [u],[v].

[u] Labi-velar voiced non-syllabic voiced occurs after a vowel when followed by a consonant.

[v^uva:l] /vavva:lu/ ‘bat’
[v] Labio-dental voiced approximant occurs elsewhere.

[va:] /va:/ ‘come’

/y/ Palatal semi-vowel phoneme has two allophones [y],[i].

[i] High front unrounded non-syllabic vocoid occurs after a vowel when followed by a pause or a consonant.

[k^i] /kay/ ‘hand’

[t^ile] /tayle/ ‘in the month of tai’

[y] palatal glide voiced contoid occurs elsewhere.

[ya:r] /ya:ru/ ‘who’

[p^iye] /payyen/ ‘boy’

III .4. DISTRIBUTION OF PONEMES

III .4.1. Positional distribution

III .4.1.1. Vowels

X indicates the presence of a phoneme.

--- indicates the absence of a phoneme.

The chart-5 shows that the short vowels /a/ and /o/ alone do not occur in the final position. All the other vowels /i, i:, e, e:, a:, o:, u, u:/ occur in all the three positions in the occupational dialects of Tamil.

Illustrations for the positional distribution of the vowel phonemes are given below.

/i/  iTi  kili  kali
III. 4.1.2. Positional distribution of consonants

All the consonants except /s, n, l, l, l, / occur in the initial position in this dialect. In the standard tamil (std.ta.) /t, r, r, l, / phoneme including /s, n, l, l, l, / phoneme do not occur in the initial position. However, in these dialects these phonemes occur in the borrowed words as given in the illustration. Some of them occur in the initial position because the loss of
vowel. All the consonants occur in the medial position without exception. But in the final position only three consonants alone can occur in this dialect. There is a general tendency in the dialect to release the consonant by a neutral vowel,

Distribution char-6 is given in the following page.

### III.4.1.2. CONSONANTS

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

X shows the presence of a phoneme.

--- shows the absence of a phoneme.

Illustrations

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<tr>
<th>p</th>
<th>pa:vu</th>
<th>mosumpa:re ---</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘warp’</td>
<td>‘dark fish’</td>
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<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>ta:vu</td>
<td>ka:tu</td>
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<td>‘oar’</td>
<td>‘ear’</td>
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<td>Tappa:</td>
<td>‘potti’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>‘can’</td>
<td>‘basket’</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### III .4.2. SEQUENTIAL DISTRIBUTUION.

In the sequential relation of the segments of the occupational terms of Tamil, three different relations of the segments are set up. One is the relation between vowel and consonant, and the other is between consonant and vowel. The next is the relationship between consonants. In this case
relationship between consonants is explained basing on their behaviour with respect to syllabic organization. If two or more consonants from part of a single syllable either as onset or coda, it is treated as cluster. If the consonant sequences give way to the split of syllabic division, then the relationship of the consonants on either side is considered as abutting consonants.

### III.4.2.1. Vowels, Initially before consonants

In the sequential system, the stream of phonemes in words the vowel /i/ occurs before the consonant phonemes:

/p,t,t,c,s,m,n,n,l,l,r,v/.

Phoneme /i:/ occurs before /t,t,c,k,n,l,r,v;y/ in the initial position.

Phoneme /e/ occurs initially when followed by the consonants /p,t,t,c,k,m,n,n,l,l,r,v/.

Phoneme /e:/ occurs initially before the consonant phonemes /p,t,t,c,k,m,n,n,l,l,l,r/.

Phoneme /a/ occurs initially before the consonants /p,t,t,c,k,m,n,n,l,l,l,r,v,y/.

Phoneme /a:/ occurs initially before the consonants /p,t,t,c,k,m,n,n,l,l,l,r,v,y/.

Phoneme /o/ occurs initially before the following consonants /p,t,t,k,n,l,l,l,r,v,y/.

Phoneme /o:/ occurs initially before the consonants /p,t,t,c,k,m,n,n,l,l,r,v,y/.

Phoneme /u/ occurs initially before the consonants /p,t,t,c,m,n,n,n,l,l,r/. 
Phoneme /u:/ occurs initially before the consonants /t,t,k,m,n,n,l,l,r/.

It is to be noted that no vowel occurs initially when the marginal phoneme /j/ follows them. Similarly the marginal phoneme occurs only in the first syllable when preceded by the vowel /i/. These marginal phonemes are defective in their distribution.

Chart-7 shows all the vowels in the word initial position when followed by the consonants.

Chart is shown in the following page.

Vowels in the initial position before the consonants

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</table>

III. 4.2.2. Distribution of vowels: medially before consonants.

/i/ occurs before all the consonants except /j,s,n,r/.

/i:/ occurs before all the consonants except /j,s,n,l,r,v,y/.

/e/ occurs before all the consonants except /j/ and /n/.

/e:/ occurs before all the consonants except /r/.

/a/ occurs before all the consonants except /j/.

/a:/ occurs Medially all the consonants except /j/
and /s/. /o/ occurs medially all the consonants except /j,s/. 

/o:/ occurs medially all the consonants except /j,s,n,r/

/u/ occurs medially all the consonants except /j,s,r,v/.

/u:/ occurs medially all the consonants except /j,s,r,y/.

All the vowels occur medially before /p,t,t,c,k,m,n,n,l and r/. See char-8 for the phonotactics of the vowels in the medial position before consonants. Chart is given in the following page.

Vowels in the medial position before the consonants

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III .4.2.3. Distribution of vowels: medially after consonants /p,t,k,m,n/

/i/ occurs medially after all the consonants except /s,n,r/.

/i:/ occurs only after the consonants /p,t,t,c,k,m,n,n/ 

/e/ occurs after all the consonants except /j,s,n,r/.

/e:/ occurs after /p,t,c,k,m,n,r,v/
/a/ occurs after all the consonants except /j,s/.

/aː/ occurs after all the consonants except /s,n/.

/o/ occurs medially after all the consonants except /j,n/ and /r/.

/oː/ occurs medially after the consonants except /t,s,n,l/, and /l,r,v/.

/u/ occurs medially after the consonants /p,t,t,c,k,m,n,l,v/.

/uː/ occurs medially after the consonants /p,t,c,k,m,n,n/ and /r/.

The distribution of vowels in the medial position after the consonants can be seen in the chart. The chart is given in the following page.

Vowels in the medial position after the consonants

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<th></th>
<th>I</th>
<th>Iː</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>eː</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>aː</th>
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</table>
III.4.2.4. Distribution of vowels: finally after consonants.

Short vowels /a/ and /o/ never occur finally.

/i/ occurs finally after all the consonants except /s,n/ and /r/.

/i:/ occurs finally only after /p,t/ and /c/.

/e/ occurs finally after all the consonants except /j,s,n/.

/e:, u:, o:/ occur finally only after the consonant /p/.

/u/ occurs finally after all the consonants except /j,s,n,r,y/.

/a:/ occurs finally after all the consonants except /s,/ and /r/.

These distributions can be seen in the chart.

The chart is given in the following page.

Vowels in the word final position after the consonants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>l</th>
<th>l:</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>e:</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>a:</th>
<th>o</th>
<th>o:</th>
<th>u</th>
<th>u:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>K</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>P</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. 4.3.0. Distribution of consonants.

III. 4.3.1 Consonants: Initially before vowels

In the initial position, retroflex consonants /T,L,N,S/ do not occur. Labial stop /p/ dental stop /t/, palatal stop /c/, velar stop /k/, labial nasal /m/, alveolar nasal /n/ and alveolar flap /r/ occur before all the vowels.

Palatal voiced stop /j/ occurs before /a,a:/ and /c:/. The palatal nasal /n/ occurs before /a:/ only. The alveolar lateral /l/ occurs before /a/ and /a:/.

The alveolar trill /r/ occurs only before /a:/ . The labio-dental approximant /v/ occurs before /i,i,e,e:,a/ and /a/:. The palatal glide /y/ occurs only before /e/ and /a:/.

The chart-11 shows the distribution of the consonants in the initial position when followed by the vowels. The chart is given in the next page.
### III. 4.3.2 Consonant in the medial position before vowels

All the consonants occur before short vowels in this dialect. There are some exceptions only before long vowels. They are given below in detail.

- `/p/ occurs before all the vowels except /iː, eː, oː/.
- `/t/ occurs before all the vowels except /iː, eː, aː, oː, uː/.
- `/t/ occurs before all the vowels except /iː, eː, oː, uː/.
- `/c/ occurs medially before all the vowels except /iː, eː, aː, oː, oː/ and /uː/.
- `/k/ occurs before all the vowels except /iː, eː, uː/.
- `/s/ is defective in distribution. It occurs only before /oː/.
- `/m/ occurs before all the vowels except /iː, eː, oː, uː/.
- `/n/ occurs before all the vowels except /iː, eː, uː/.
/n/ occurs before all the vowels except /i:, e:, o:/.

/n/ occurs medially before only /u:/ . It is defective in distribution. It is one of the low frequency phonemes in this dialect.

/l/ and /l/ occur medially before all the vowels except /i:, e:, o:, u:/.

/l/ occurs medially before /i,e,a,u/.

/r/ occurs medially before all the vowels except /i,e,o:/ and /u:/.

/r/ occurs only before /a:/.

/v/ occurs medially before all the vowels except /i,i:,e:,o:,u:/.

/y/ occurs medially before /l,e,a,a:,o:/

Chart-12 shows the distribution of these consonants in the medial position before vowels. Chart is given in the following page.

Consonants in the medial position before the vowels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>p</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>j</th>
<th>k</th>
<th>s</th>
<th>m</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>l</th>
<th>l</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>v</th>
<th>y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>e:</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>a:</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o:</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>u:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. 4.3.3 CONSONANTS: Medially after vowels.

Consonants in the medial position occur after all the vowels except the irregular ones. The consonants /j,s,n/ and /r/ are irregular in their distribution.

/j/ never occurs medially without free varying with /c/.

/n/ occurs medially after /i,a,a:,u/.

/n/ occurs medially after all the vowels except /i:,o:/.

/r/ occurs medially after /e/

The chart-13 shows the distribution of these consonants in the medial position after vowels. The chart is given in the next page.

Consonants in the medial position after the vowels.

|   | p | t | t | c | j | k | s | m | n | n | n | l | l | l | r | r | v | y |
| i |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| i |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| e |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| e:|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| a |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| a:|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| o |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| o:|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| u |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| u:|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
III. 4.3.4. Consonants in the final position after vowels

There are only three consonants /m n y/ which occur in the word final position in this dialect. Consonantal endings are rare and normally they are released with a vowel in the spoken language.

/m/ occurs finally after the vowels /o o: u/.

/n/ occurs finally after the vowels /e a a:/.

/y/ occurs finally after the vowels /a a:/.

It is to be noted in this dialect the phonemes /m/ and /n/ in the final position are due to the nasalized vocoids. The phoneme /y/ is either lost in this position in the fast speech or a vowel is added as a release. For example /kay/ ‘unripped fruit’ becomes /ka:/ in polysyllabic words like /ma:nka:/ ‘mango’ or as a free form it varies with /ka:yi/ ‘unripped fruit’. It is to be noted that the phonemes /l/ and /l/ are lost in the final position before a pause.

Eg. Avel> ave ‘she’

Vanta:l> vanta: ‘if some one comes’

Consonants in the word final position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>m</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a:</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>o:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*indicates the presence of the phoneme.
1.5. CLUSTERS.

III. 5.1. Vowels.

Vowels clusters are not found in this Tamil dialect. Even at the morphophonemic level, if two vowels occur in the morpheme boundaries either one of the vowels may be dropped or a glide (semivowel) occurs in between them to avoid the vowel hiatus. The occupational dialects has /y/ and /v/ as such glides. These glides are phonologically conditioned.

III. 5.2. Consonants

Consonant clusters occur in this dialect both in the initial and medial positions. There is no cluster in the word final position. In the initial position the consonant clusters are either due to borrowing or by the loss of the first vowel in the initial syllable historically. Therefore both in the native and borrowed words initial clusters are found.

III. 5.2.1 INITIAL CONSONANT CLUSTERS.

In the initial position, only two consonant clusters are found as already mentioned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pr-</td>
<td>pra:ntu</td>
<td>‘kite’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tr-</td>
<td>tra:cuveli</td>
<td>‘name of a star’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kr-</td>
<td>kra:nom</td>
<td>‘eclipse’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kl-</td>
<td>kla:cu</td>
<td>‘glass’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cr-</td>
<td>cra:kutti</td>
<td>‘shark’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vl-</td>
<td>vla:nku</td>
<td>‘gel fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vr-</td>
<td>vratom</td>
<td>‘fasting’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vy-</td>
<td>vya:len</td>
<td>‘Thursday’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Initial consonant clusters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>f</th>
<th>l</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>y</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>p</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>t</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>k</td>
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<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>c</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X indicates the presence of the cluster.

III. 5.2.2 Medial consonant clusters

In the medial position only two consonant non-identical clusters are available within a syllable. If the syllabic division is not a barrier to the cluster, then there may be three or even four consonants can occur in the syllabic boundaries i.e., including the coda of the preceding syllable and the onset of the following syllable. Here only the clusters within a syllable have been shown by the symbol ‘-‘.

- tr-   me:c-tri   ‘supervisor’
- tr-   kav-tra:lu   ‘prawn’
- vt-   kavt-tu vale   ‘cotton rope net’
- vr-   pavr-nemi   ‘full moon’
-       tavr-tu   ‘jumping’
- mp-   amp-Ten   ‘barber’
-       kump-lu   ‘crowd’
-       pomp-le   ‘woman’
- nt-   cant-ren   ‘moon’
III. 5.2.3. ABUTTING

Abutting can be divided into two viz. Abutting in identical sequence and abutting in non-identical sequence.

III. 5.2.3.1. Abutting in identical sequence.
-nn- an-nu:ru ‘five hundred’
-ll- nel-lu ‘paddy’
-ll- ul-la:n ‘aquatic bird’

III. 5.2.3.2 Abutting in non-identical sequence of consonants

-pt- taippaTTom ‘seedling sesgin’
-pn- culup-na:nka:te ‘a kind of fish’
-pn- cotap-ne ‘water plant’
-tl- vet-le ‘betal leaves’
-tr- mo:t-rom ‘ring’
-tn- pat-nu:lvale ‘silk net’
-tl- ma:t-la: ‘a kind of fish’
-tr- mo:t-tra:lu ‘lobster’
-kt- cak-ti ‘energy’
-kt- ca:k-te ‘drainage’
-cl- ko:c:lu ‘wind direction’
-mp- cutum-pu ‘a kind of fish’
-mc- cam-ci ‘matured’
-mn- ta:m-ni ‘net’
-mr- kum-rinantu ‘one legged crab’
-mn- katam-na:nka:te ‘thick trout fish’
-nt- pra:n-tu ‘kite’
-nt- nan-Tu ‘crab’
-nc- man-ce ‘turmeric’
-nk- vla:n-ku ‘eel fish’
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>np-</td>
<td>mihn-poTTi</td>
<td>‘fish basket’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vc-</td>
<td>av-cakom</td>
<td>‘holy bath’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vn-</td>
<td>ta:v-ni</td>
<td>‘holy saree’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vl-</td>
<td>kov-le</td>
<td>‘jar’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vr-</td>
<td>kar-ru</td>
<td>‘rope’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>st-</td>
<td>kas-tom</td>
<td>‘difficulty’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nv-</td>
<td>min-vanku</td>
<td>‘net for cattamaran’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nc-</td>
<td>man-civale</td>
<td>‘fine net’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lp-</td>
<td>kal-pa:te</td>
<td>‘six banded trevally’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lk-</td>
<td>katal-ka:kka:</td>
<td>‘sea gulls’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ln-</td>
<td>pal-na:kku</td>
<td>‘part of a boat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lv-</td>
<td>nu:l-vale</td>
<td>‘cotton net’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ly-</td>
<td>kal-ya:nom</td>
<td>‘marriage’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lr-</td>
<td>kal-ra:lu</td>
<td>‘stone fish (prawn)’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lp-</td>
<td>ul-pa:tti</td>
<td>‘a kind of fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lr-</td>
<td>vel-ra:mi:nu</td>
<td>‘white fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ll-</td>
<td>nol-la:vale</td>
<td>‘name of a net’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rp-</td>
<td>kar-pu</td>
<td>‘black’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rt-</td>
<td>er-ti</td>
<td>‘a kind of fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rt-</td>
<td>por-ta:ci</td>
<td>‘name of a month’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rc-</td>
<td>pe:r-ce</td>
<td>‘date palm’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rk-</td>
<td>ma:r-kali</td>
<td>‘Nov-december month’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rn-</td>
<td>pu:r-nom</td>
<td>‘full’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rn-</td>
<td>ar-ne</td>
<td>‘lizard’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
-rl- ka:r-lu ‘mullet fish’
-rv- ve:r-ve ‘sweat’
-ry- cu:r-yen ‘sun’
-ym- kay-murukku ‘a dish’
-yn- pay-ni ‘palm-juice’
-yr- a:y-rom ‘thousand’
-yl- lay-la:n ‘nylon’
-yv- tey-vom ‘god’

Abutting in identical sequences

|   | p | t | t | c | j | k | s | M | n | n | n | l | l | l | r | r | v | y |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| f |   | p |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| i |   | t |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| r |   | t |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| s |   | c |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| t |   | j |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| k |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| m |   | s |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| e |   | m |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| m |   | n |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| b |   | n |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| e |   | n |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| r |   | l |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| l |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| l |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| r |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| r |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| v |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| y |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
Abutting in non-identical sequences

| f | p | t | t | c | j | k | s | M | n | n | n | l | l | l | r | r | v | y |
| i | t |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| r | t |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| s | c | t | j | k | m | s | e | m | m | n | b | n | e | n | r | l | l | l | r | r | v | y |

### III. 6 SYLLABLES

A syllable is a unit whose members are stated in terms of phonemes. Syllables are defined as the smallest unit of recurrent phonemic sequences which constitute the most convenient framework for describing the distribution of phonemes. (Haugen 1956:216).

Every syllable is constituted obligatorily by a peak which is invariable a vowel in the occupational terms of Tamil. The peak may be either preceded by an onset or followed by a coda or both. The peak is the nucleus of the syllable constituted by a short or long vowel.

In the occupational vocabulary, the initial syllable may or may not have an onset. But the medial syllable and final syllable should have the onset. If two consonants occur in the medial position, the first member...
becomes the coda of the first syllable or the preceding syllable, while the second consonant becomes the onset of the following syllable. If medially three consonants or four consonants occur, the first two consonants become the coda of the preceding syllable, whereas the remaining consonant (s) become (s) the onset of the following syllable.

Syllables are looked as the constituents of words and their structure is explained on the basis of the words viz. monosyllabic, disyllabic and poly syllabic.

III . 6.1. Monosyllabic words

Monosyllabic words are those constituted by a single syllable. In the occupational dialects, the monosyllabic words are classified into four types based on the canonical patterns. They are: v:, cV:, CCV:, and CVC.

Open syllables

V: i: 'fly'
CV: va: 'come'
CCV: cra: 'shark'

These can be generalized as follows:

(C) (C)V:

Closed syllables

CVC kay 'hand'
CV:C ka:y 'unripped fruit'
These can be generalized as follows:

**CVC**

### III. 6. 2. Disyllabic words

Disyllabic words are those constituted by two syllables each in this dialect. They are classified into open and closed syllables.

**Open syllables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VCV</td>
<td>ati</td>
<td>‘beat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V:CV</td>
<td>a:ni</td>
<td>‘nail’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCV:</td>
<td>era:</td>
<td>‘prawn’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V:CCV</td>
<td>a:TTu</td>
<td>‘shake’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCCV</td>
<td>oTTe</td>
<td>‘small measurement’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCCV:</td>
<td>amma:</td>
<td>‘mother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V:CCV</td>
<td>a:tta:</td>
<td>‘grand mother’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVCV</td>
<td>tuni</td>
<td>‘cloth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV:CV</td>
<td>va:lu</td>
<td>‘saw’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV:CCV</td>
<td>muTTu</td>
<td>‘saport legh’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV:CCV</td>
<td>ka:rlu</td>
<td>‘black fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV:CCV</td>
<td>ka:kka:</td>
<td>‘crow’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The canonical forms can be generalized as follows:

(i) V(C)CV, (ii) CV(C) CV

**Closed syllables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VCVC</td>
<td>arom</td>
<td>‘file’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V:CVC</td>
<td>a:lom</td>
<td>‘depth’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V:CCVC</td>
<td>a:TTom</td>
<td>‘to shake’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.6.3 Trisyllabic words

Trisyllabic words consist of three syllables. In this dialect it should be noted that disyllabic and trisyllabic words form major part of the vocabulary. Most of the trisyllabic words end in open syllabic rather than closed syllable. The tendency of releasing the final consonant in Tamil dialects is a noteworthy criterion.

Open Syllable

VCVCV
VCVCV
VCVCCV
VCVCCV
VCCVCV
CV:CCCV
CV:CVCCV
CVCV:CCV
CV:CCV:CCV
CV:CCV:CV
CCVCCV:CV

uluve 'sel fish'
a:la:kku ‘1/8 of a measure’
olakku ‘1/16 of a measure’
oppane ‘decoration’
ma:rkali ‘Nov.dec.months’
na:lakki ‘tomorrow’
kerja:kki ‘high price’
pa:mpa:tti ‘snake charmer’
tanka:cci ‘younger sister’
mo:katte ‘chin’
krisna:lu ‘kerosine’
CVCCVCVCV | tamplaru | ‘tumbler’

The canonical patterns can be generalized as follows:

(i) VC(C)VCV
(ii) VCCVCCV
(iii) CVC(C)VCV
(iv) CVCV(C)CV
(v) C(C)VCCVCV

### III.6.6. Tetra syllabic words.

Tetra-syllabic words have four syllables each. Most of the words of this syllabic structure consist of more than one morpheme. There are a few words with single morpheme. However they occur as a single unit. Therefore they are analysed and included under this subdivision.

**Open Syllable**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CVCCVCVCV</th>
<th>irumpalu</th>
<th>‘cough’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V:CCVCVCCV</td>
<td>a:ttunanTu</td>
<td>‘river crab’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V:CCV:CCVCV</td>
<td>o:TTa:mpare</td>
<td>‘stone fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V:CV:CCVCCV</td>
<td>a:ra:mvelli</td>
<td>‘sixth star’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVCVCV:CV</td>
<td>karuva:Tu</td>
<td>‘dry fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVCVCVCVCVCV</td>
<td>talappotti</td>
<td>‘straw hat’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVCVCV:CV:</td>
<td>varikko:la:</td>
<td>‘flying fish’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CV:CCVCVCVCV</td>
<td>tu:nTipari</td>
<td>‘fish hooks basket’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVCCVCVCVCV:CV</td>
<td>ceTTiya:ru</td>
<td>‘chetti caste’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The canonical pattern may be generalized as follows:

(i) \( V(C)C \) \( V \) \( CCVC(C)V \)
(ii) \( CVC(C)VCVCV \)

Closed syllables

\( \text{CVCVCVCVC} \) \( \text{marumoven} \) ‘son-in-law’
\( \text{VCVCCV:VCVC} \) \( \text{atukko:carom} \) ‘for that’
\( \text{V:CCVCVCVC} \) \( \text{u:ttuka:ren} \) ‘land lord’

1.6.5 Penta syllabic words

Penta syllabic words consist of five syllables each. They are all poly morphemic in their structure. There are a number of forms in this dialect under this category, where most of them and in open syllable. Only a few words end in closed syllable.

Open syllables

\( \text{CV:CVCVCCVC} \) \( \text{va:TekonTalu} \) ‘northern wind’
\( \text{CVCVCVCV} \) \( \text{vaTitaTTu} \) ‘filtré plate’
\( \text{CVCCVCVCVC} \) \( \text{vellikelame} \) ‘Friday’
\( \text{CVCVCCVCVC} \) \( \text{tirukkava:le} \) ‘sail fish’

Closed syllables

\( \text{VCVCCVCVC} \) \( \text{elantepalom} \) ‘Indian berry’
\( \text{CVCCVCVCVC} \) \( \text{kannupuruvom} \) ‘eye-brow’

1.6.7. Hexa-syllabic words

Hexa syllabic words have six syllables in each. They are open syllable words. Hexa syllabic words are few in number.
Open syllables.

CVCVCVCVCV:CCV  parayenpera:ntu  ‘vulture’
CVCVCVCVCV:CV  karuva:tti:va:li  ‘black-bird’

Septa-syllabic words

In the occupational dialects of Tamil these are the words with seven syllables. In each pattern only one word is available in the data. Compounds may be formed but they are not natural. However these forms are given below.

Open syllables

CVCCVCVCVCV:CCVCCV  nollamataya:nkokku  ‘stark’
VCVCCV:CVCVCVCV:  atuppu:tiporuva:  ‘water fowl’

1.6.8. Initial syllables.

There are six types of open syllables in the initial position. They are as follows:

V-  i:-ven  ‘he’ (proximate)
V:-  i:  ‘fly’
V:-  i:ru  ‘nits’
CV:-  pa:-  ‘tusing’  va:  ‘come’
CV-  pa-ti  ‘study’
(C)CV:-  kra:-nom  ‘eclipse’  tra:-cu  ‘balance’
(C)CV-  tru-kke  ‘a kind of fish’

These six types can be generalized as follows:

(C)(C)V-
Closed syllables

There are six types of closed syllables in the initial position. They are given below:

VC- ar-tom ‘meaning’
V:C- a:p-pom ‘sweet dish’
CVC- pat-rom ‘safety’
CV:C- pa:t-rom ‘vessel’
CVCC- tamp-laru ‘tumblar’
CCV:C cra:k-kutti ‘shark’

(C)(C)VC(C)-

1.6.9. The above types can be generalized as follows

1.6.10. Medial syllables

There are three types of open syllables medially in this dialect.

Open syllables

-CV- u-lu-ve ‘eel fish’
-CV:- op-pa:-ri ‘lamentation’
-CCV- can-tra-kra:nom ‘lunar eclipse’

The above patterns can be generalized as follows:

-(C)CV-

Closed syllables

There are two types of closed syllables in this dialect. They are as follows.

-CVC- o-lak-ku ‘1/8 of a measure’
-CV:C a:la:k-ku ‘1/16 of a measure’
These can be generalized as :-CVC-

1.6.11. Final syllables.

Most of the words in this dialect end in open syllable. There are a few forms which end either in a nasal phonetically or a liquid consonant. Therefore closed final syllables are very rare in this speech. This hypothesis holds good to the spoken Tamil in general.

There are three types of closed syllables finally.

-CVC  ma-rom ‘tree’
-CVC  a:mpata-ya:n ‘husband’
-CCVC  ca:yn-trom ‘evening’
        cat-trom ‘choultry’

The above types can be generalized as:- (C)CVC.

Open syllables

-CV  to:-ni ‘boat’
        vi-ri ‘spread’
        ta-le ‘head’
        va-le ‘net’
        up-pu ‘salt’
-CV:  ko:-la: ‘flying fish’
        ma:n-ka: ‘mango’