

Chapter IV: Children's Songs/Chants/Dances/Games

A) Background.

1) Introduction to Children's Songs/Chants/Dances/Games.

a) Children's Play.

Anything can be done in a playful manner, as play is a “communication style” (Beresin 1993, p. 252), “an orientation, a mode of experience” (Garvey 1977, p. 28), a frame of mind, and an attitude. Three conditions an activity must satisfy to qualify as play are 1) it occurs in a certain place, 2) it occurs during a certain time, 3) and it is done for its own sake, that is, for fun. Play may serve as a model of the past, and a model for the future. Two types of play are games (which is rule-centric, and competitive) and art (which is process-, aesthetics-, and feeling-centric, and is collaborative) (Huizinga 1949).

Many theories have been put forth regarding the purposes and functions of play. These include the ideas that play is a way to release excess energy; to escape pressures; to develop self, identity, and imagination; and to assert power. Play sometimes provides an opportunity to pick apart received structures, and to

reframe, reformulate, and reorganize the material into new categories and combinations. Children's play may involve practicing or experimenting with linguistic and cultural routines. Play provides an opportunity to work through feelings about what has been presented to one, and about how it has been presented. Children may play to discover and express their hidden thoughts and feelings. In play, a child can transport learned material into the realm of her imagination, where she can be free and able to re-shape and re-express it. Here she can digest the material, and make it her own. In play, a child may be able to escape adult rules; assert control over (imaginary) situations; and establish that other ways of doing things are possible. Play can provide opportunities to create and experiment with some of those ways. Children may play to discover and express their hidden thoughts and feelings. In the course of play, a child may transgress societal rules without, or with less of, the normal danger of punishment.

In play, children bond, and so create collective, shared realities. Play can assist in the development of coordination (mind-body, eye-hand, etc.); but children also sometimes play to make themselves dizzy. Children play to experiment with applying general patterns to new circumstances, and play provides an opportunity to experience situations from numerous points of view. Children play for the aesthetic pleasure of making rhythm, rhyme, and other forms of repetition and pattern; and of making openings and endings, which give form and closure

to experience. After playing, a child can return to society's rules, and perhaps create compromises between the self's (and the group's) ways, and the larger society's ways.

Some of play's many possible functions are not constructive, from some authority figures' points of view. For example: play can provide opportunities to ignore, transgress, and/or mock the normal rules of behavior. In play, one can de-program, disorient, or other-orient, oneself. In verbal play the rules of phonetics (sounds), semantics (words), and syntax (sentence formation) are sometimes disregarded, reversed, modified (to form a play language), or overgeneralized or otherwise applied purposefully incorrectly. Thus, play can serve to subvert the public culture system and/or one's perception and performance of it.

Most scholars of children's play posit that play is inextricably related to the players' intellectual and physical development. For example, Brian Sutton-Smith's theory of children's play as "adaptive potentiation" claims that a primary function of play is to give the child practice in mental flexibility (1997). In other words, play can get the child in the habit of breaking habits, which can lead to progress in the individual and in the species. However, some play necessitates doing exactly the same thing over and over again. Moreover it is very difficult to prove any play-causes-progress hypothesis, and one should never take such a

thing for granted, for one aspect of play is that rejects or is oblivious to any “serious” goal, or any goal whatsoever.

b) Children’s Songs/Chants/Dances/Games.

Fields within which children’s songs/chants/dances/games may be studied include Anthropology of Play, Ethnography of Speaking, Sociolinguistics, Sociokinetics (the study of ways of moving in different societies), and Ethnomusicology.

Playing songs/chants/dances/games helps children develop mind-body coordination (Jones and Hawes 1972). These play activities also provide children opportunities to experience many of the social roles and life-cycle events that constitute life in the community. Songs/chants/dances/games often contain historical and cultural references, some of them very ancient and obscure. They may also contain measures of nonsense, some of it memorized. In children’s songs/chants/dances/games, there is often a statement and response, or a question and response. These interactional routines present possible options for thought, expression, behavior, work-roles, and relationships in the community (Opie 1985). The opportunity to improvise new words to express the feelings and thoughts of the moment are often built into the activity.

The history of scholarship regarding children's songs/chants/dances/games began in earnest in 1883, with the publication of William Newell's *Games and Songs of American Children*. A literary scholar, Newell (1839-1907) was a leader of the ten men (five anthropologists, and five literary scholars) who founded the American Folklore Society in 1888. He edited the first thirteen volumes of the Association's journal, the *Journal of American Folklore*, from 1888 to 1900. The son of a minister, he graduated from Harvard Divinity School in 1863. He had wide-ranging interests as a scholar, and was able to read numerous languages. He founded a school in New York City around 1870, which he ran through the mid-1880s. It was largely through students of this school that Newell became aware of children's play activities, although it seems that most of his collecting was done from adults who recollected and wrote down the words of their childhood activities, often sending their contributions to him by mail.

Newell was very interested in how folklore developed through time, and how it traveled, especially from the Old World of Europe to the New World of the USA. He was aware that multiple variants of activities existed. Perhaps influenced by class prejudices of the time, he theorized that folklore tended to be transmitted "downward," from more refined and "advanced" cultures to "simpler" ones, degenerating linguistically in the process. Newell feared that children's folklore was disappearing quickly, and thus he felt that there was an urgent need to document it.

Newell's work was soon joined by the collection published by Alice Gomme on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, *The Traditional Games of England, Scotland, and Ireland, with Tunes, Singing-rhymes, and Methods of Playing According to the Variants Extant and Recorded in Different Parts of the Kingdom* (2 volumes, 1894 and 1898). Alice Gomme, a founding member of England's Folk-Lore Society (in 1878), was the first scholar to identify children's "singing-games," as she called them, as a separate genre of folklore. She organized a group of children from the English countryside to demonstrate singing-games at the first International Folk-Lore Congress, in London in October 1891 (Boyes 2001). Her primary approach to children's singing-games was "survivalist" -- she was interested in how fragments of rituals and other aspects of "primitive" customs and beliefs might have survived in the children's singing-games of her day.

Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-element in Culture* (1949) put play, and the study of it, on the intellectual map. However, this philosophical book explored play in adult culture, and did not pertain particularly to children's play activities.

From the late 1800s until the 1960s, almost all studies of children's folklore were of English language activities found in England and the USA. One exception was the work of Dorothy Howard, a USA scholar, who conducted research in Australia (with European-Australian children only) in the mid-1950s. Her

subsequent writings proved to be very important to the field. She was known for her approach of visiting with children, and collecting the material directly from them. Indeed,

It was a remarkable idea to take play and game records directly from children while they were in the playground... The greatest of all modern British children's folklore scholars, Iona and Peter Opie, were still relying to a considerable degree on the kind of reporting that Lady Gomme did when they produced their first three books on children's playground lore: *The Lore and Language of School Children* (1959), *Children's Games in Street and Playground* (1969), and *The Singing Game* (1985). It is not until the 1993 publication of Iona Opie's notes and commentary on life in the playground, *The People in the Playground*, that the source of information is almost entirely children. (Sutton-Smith 2005)

Dorothy Howard was also a pioneer in regard to her awareness of the extra-verbal aspects of the children's play activities:

In the beginning, my attention had been concentrated on verbal aspects of children's play. But as I spent more and more time in the playground, I became more and more aware that children's voices accompanied other body movements, and that children moved in group patterns. (Howard, as cited in Factor 2005, p. 5)

Dorothy Howard's work inspired the Opies (England), Brian Sutton-Smith (New Zealand), June Factor (Australia), and many others. Roger Abrahams led the way in collecting and writing about children's songs/chants/dances/games in the

wave of USA Folklore scholarship in the early 60s that would come to be known as the *Performance-centered approach to folklore* (1962, 1963a, 1963b, 1966).

In the years that have followed, similar scholarship has been carried out throughout the world, in such cultures as South Africa (Blacking 1967), Finland (Virtanen 1978), Afghanistan (Oudenhoven 1979), Thailand (Anderson 1973; Phoasavadi and Campbell 2003), Korea (Kim 1998), Australia (Marsh 1997), the Eastern Caribbean area (Lomax, Elder, and Hawes 1997), and the Virgin Islands (Ellis 1990), to name just a few.

In 1973, The Association for the Anthropological Study of Play was formed (in 1978, the name was shortened to The Association for the Study of Play).¹ From its inception, TASP brought together scholars from many disciplines and sub-disciplines, including Anthropology, Folklore, Education, Physical Education, Psychology, Sociology, and Sociolinguistics.

During its early years, TASP published proceedings of its annual meetings. Some of the papers presented at TASP's 1978 annual meeting were published as *Transformations: the Anthropology of Children's Play*, edited by Helen Schwartzman. The essays that comprise this book feature a wide array of theoretical approaches, and many of the essays are supported by ethnographic

¹ <http://www.tasplay.org> .

research that includes transcriptions of players' spoken and sung words. The book raised the study of children's play to new levels of visibility and respectability in the academic world.

In 1979, the American Folklore Society established a Children's Folklore Section, thus further contributing to the academic stature of the study of children's folklore. The Section produces the bi-annual journal, *Children's Folklore Review*, and in 1995, members of this cohort published *Children's Folklore: A Source Book*.

Beginning in 1988, TASP replaced its publication of proceedings with publication of the following annual journals: *Play and Culture* (1988-1992), *Journal of Play Theory and Research* (1993-1997), and *Play and Culture Studies* (1998-present).

In 1997, Brian Sutton-Smith presented the idea that play involves flexibility of thinking (1997), and is for this reason crucial to the creative and cognitive development of the individual, and to the evolution of human culture. This idea, which he calls, *adaptive potentiation*, remains a leader of the field of Play Studies.

A review of scholarship about children's songs/chants/dances/games in 2002 demonstrated that Ethnomusicology has become the most popular discipline within which this subject matter is being studied (Minks 2002).

Beginning in 2008, the *American Journal of Play*,¹ has been published by the Strong National Museum of Play, which claims to be “the only museum anywhere devoted solely to the role of play in learning and human development.”²

As time has progressed, the study of children’s songs/chants/dances/games, like the study of folklore in general, has matured in various ways. Advances have included:

- 1) Realizing that these activities are not fossilized relics, but rather that they are constantly evolving, and incorporating new elements.
- 2) Collecting material directly from the performers, often in the course of performance -- rather than from adults who might write down the words and mail them to the collector.
- 3) This collecting from performers -- and attention to, and analysis of, extra-verbal elements of the activities -- has been facilitated by the growing availability of portable audio recording equipment (widely available since the 1960s), and portable video recording equipment (widely available since the 1980s).

¹ <http://www.americanjournalofplay.org> .

² <http://www.museumofplay.org> .

4) Discussing the material with the performers, so as to learn their interpretations and other points of view regarding the material.

It was not until the 1960s that scholars of children's songs/chants/dances/games generally began to take seriously the importance of documenting the precise words spoken by the performers (rather than what the scholar might have felt the performer should ideally have said); and of considering the aesthetic level of the activities beyond just the meanings of the words, such as body movements. As mentioned, it was in part the growing availability of audio and video recording devices that prompted and enabled this raising of consciousness.

These advances together have helped to present a more human, rounded, contextualized picture of children's play activities, and the children who perform them. They have helped to convey that the performers are fluid human individuals with intellectual interiors, and not just exotic others, not just objects performing fossilized objects. It is ironic that just as scholars are becoming mentally and technologically equipped to really do justice to the traditional activities that they wish to study, the performance of those activities is, generally-speaking, being abandoned.

In play activities, physical location in relation to others and to landmarks can indicate being in and safe, as opposed to being *out*, *out of bounds*, or *out of the*

game altogether. Here feelings around inclusion and exclusion are experienced and explored, as children learn what is in and what is out, both in the particular game and in the society in general. Some of these activities involve competition. All involve alternation, cooperation, collaboration on the parts of the players.

At certain times in verbal play -- when participants agree that they are entering such a phase -- words can be improvised and rules are flexible. Indeed, in play it is always possible to negotiate and change rules in mid-stream. Games can end in horseplay, and chaos may ensue well before a play activity "is supposed to" end. In accumulation songs, for example, the tempo may accelerate and become increasingly intense as the game proceeds. Such games may -- and in some cases, are meant to -- culminate in frenzy and laughter.

Some of the formations that children around the world use for songs/chants/dances/games are a line; an arch (two players facing each other, arms up and forward, palms touching), with a line of players passing through the arch; two lines facing each other; a semi-circle; and a circle (Opie 1985). A circle can denote friendly communion. Two lines facing each other can denote opposition: question-and-answer exchanges often form essential parts of this type of game. Players in each line may join hands, and the lines may advance and retreat while players sing or speak their parts.

2) Introduction to South Indian Children's Songs/Chants/Dances/Games.

Here I will give a brief overview of Folklore scholarship in India (and especially in south India) regarding verbal arts in general, and then of children's songs/chants/dances/games in particular.

a) Scholarship about Verbal Arts in India, and especially in South India.

The folktale is a leading genre that has been studied in the discipline of Folklore. One of the first English-language publications of a collection of folktales of India was, *Old Deccan Days, or Hindoo Fairy Legends* (1868). This was composed of stories told to Mary Frere, daughter of the British governor of Bombay at the time, by her family's maid, Anna Liberata de Souza.

Many other books of Indian folktales have been published over the years, including two by A. K. Ramanujan (1991, 1997).

English-language publication of local verbal arts in India has until very recently typically involved not only translation (from a local language into English), but also paraphrasing and editing of what performers actually said. It is a relatively

new idea that it may be useful to present a performer's exact words and sentences, and identify a performer by name and place.

In the case of *Mondays on the Dark Side of the Moon: Himalayan Foothill Folktales* (1997), Kiran Narayan handled this issue by having the community resource person, Urmila Devi Sood, be the book's co-author.

Oral epics are another genre that have been given a good deal of literary attention in India. An epic is usually defined as a long story of a historical or legendary nature, which is performed with stylized forms of speech, with the primary speaker at times accompanied by musical instruments and additional performers. *Oral Epics in India* (Blackburn et al, 1989) contained a fine collection of, and commentaries about, such stories.

In south India:

Folk-songs of Southern India (1871) was an early English-language publication of a collection of south Indian folksongs.

K. Kailasapathy applied Parry-Lord's theory of oral-formulaic method of composition to ancient literary Tamil poetry and epic in his *Tamil Heroic Poetry* (1968). The highly formulaic nature of this literature indeed suggests that it may

have been derived from oral poetry and epic. N. Vanamamalai (1969, 1981, 1990) published a journal and numerous books centering on living Tamil folk verbal arts, and how the sufferings and yearnings of the poor were expressed through these mediums. David Shulman published a wonderful collection of Tamil temple myths, with an equally fascinating analysis (1980).

Brenda Beck's *The Three Twins: The Telling of a South Indian Folk Epic* (1982) marked the appearance of scholarship that included the actual spoken words of performers. In works such as this, transcriptions of oral performances were presented in Tamil and/or in Latin alphabet phonetic representations of Tamil; and in English translation.

The Kotas and Todas are tribal peoples living in the Nilgiri mountains in western Tamil Nadu. Murray Emeneau published books of Kota stories (1944-46), and Toda songs (1971). Richard Wolf's *The Black Cow's Footprint: Time, Space, and Music in the Lives of the Kotas of South India*. (2006) is an excellent ethnographic study of music and ritual in a community.

Lauri Honko's *The Siri Epic, as Performed by Gopala Naika* (1998) features careful and respectful representation of a performed epic from of the Tulu-speaking region of coastal Karnataka.

Stuart Blackburn has been a leading figure in recent scholarship relating to Tamil verbal arts. He has written books on three very different Tamil verbal arts traditions: *Villupattu (Bow Songs)* (1988); shadow puppetry (1996); and the telling of folktales (2002).

Blackburn was trained as a folklorist by Alan Dundes at the University of California, Berkeley, and thus can be thought of as a second-generation member of the group of USA Folklorists who founded and developed the *Performance-centered approach to folklore* (although Blackburn has warned against letting this approach detract from attention paid to the content of stories). Blackburn was a prominent member of the group of USA scholars (which also included Alan Jabbour and Dan Ben-Amos) which shared its recently-developed folklore-related methods and approaches with Indian scholars in the 1980s and 1990s. This was done largely through travel, conferences, and workshops (in audio and video documentation, among other subjects) sponsored by the Ford Foundation, which also helped to fund numerous Folklore departments and centers in south India during this period -- including at Madurai Kamaraj University, and St. Xavier's College, at Palayamkottai, near Tirunelveli. The Ford Foundation has to a large degree shifted its focus to other disciplines and places, but its support for Folklore Studies in south India during these years has had a deep and lasting effect.

Stuart Blackburn and A. K. Ramanujan edited *Another Harmony: New Essays on the Folklore of India* (1986): one reason that this book was so refreshing was that many of its essays linked legendary artistic practices of the olden days, with folk arts practices of the present.

Margaret Trawick was one of the first to write about oppaari, the lament singing of Tamil women (1986, 90). Paul Greene added consideration of male oppaari singers, and ways in which the oppaari repertoire may overlap with cinema songs (1999). Transgender people in Tamil Nadu also have a ritual lament tradition (Babu 2007). Saraswathi Venugopal has compared and contrasted lullabies and laments (1996). Kalpana Ram has written about how elements of lament songs appear in some women's visions of their life stories (2007). All of this work -- plus the fact that oppaari is still practiced in Tamil Nadu, has helped to make Tamil Nadu one of the leading sites in the world for lament studies.

Richard Frasca found that *Therukkuttu*, a genre of traditional folk street theater, was still being performed in much of northern Tamil Nadu (1990). Alf Hildebeitel has analyzed the genre's stories (1988, 1999). Hanne de Bruin, who knows this genre as *Kattaikkuttu* (1999), has helped to found a school for teaching it near Kanchipuram, a short distance south of Chennai.¹ Sarah Diamond has written about *Karagattam*, a Tamil dance ritual form that also involves singing and

¹ Please see <http://www.kattaikkuttu.org> .

dialogue (1999). Susan Seizer has written about *Special Drama*, a form of Tamil theatre with characters, storylines, and performance conventions that are so well-known, performers do not need to rehearse together (2005).

Isabelle Nabakov has written about sami and related ritual practices in Tamil Nadu (2000). Verbal arts are involved in the sami process both in calling the divine figure into oneself, often by praising him or her, and telling his or her story; and also when the divine figure is speaking through one.

b) Scholarship about Children's Songs/Chants/Dances/Games in India, and Especially in South India.

There has been some consideration of Indian children's play -- including among among tribal peoples (Narayan 1995), and in urban environments (Oke et al, 1999). There are also how-to manuals for children and their guardians, regarding how to play traditional Indian games (Barooah 1998),

However, most of the scholarship about verbal arts in India has been done in relation to the adult genres mentioned above. Reasons for this may include that some may feel that the adult genres of verbal arts are -- at least on the verbal level -- more developed, complex, and significant. Most of the attention that has

been paid to children's play in India has been in the fields of Education (Muralidharan et al, 1981), and Developmental Psychology (Roopnarine et al, 1990; Roopnarine et al, 1994).

In south India: Peter Claus wrote about social attitudes about a board game, *cenne*, played in much of south India (1987): the playing of this game is part of a central episode of the *Siri* epic. V. Balambal's *Folk Games of Tamilnadu* (2005) is a fine survey, but concentrates on board games traditionally played by women.

In her dissertation on mother-child talk among Tamil people, Susan Williamson discussed a game called *kuttu-kuttu-taambaLam* (1979, p. 165). The game requires children to sit in a circle and answer certain questions. The questions are chanted, and the chants are accompanied by the tapping of fists on the ground.

There are dissertations written in Tamil relating to Tamil children's songs/chants/dances/games, but I am sorry to say that it was beyond the parameters of this dissertation's research process for me to go to the Tamil university libraries involved, find the dissertations, and have them translated into English -- for while I can read and write the Tamil alphabet and basic sentences, my vocabulary and grammatical knowledge is not sufficient for me to read scholarly works written in Tamil.

B) Original Data.

List of Songs/Chants/Dances/Games with Descriptions.

- 1) ஒரு கல்லு *Tamil*
- o ru kal lu *Transliteration*
- one stone *Translation (word-for-word)*
- One Stone. *Translation (formatted/sentence)*

Movement with song: ring dance (the ring rotates, with action sometimes directed towards the center).

- 2) ஒண்ணாம் பாத்தி
- oN Naam paat thi
- one garden
- One Garden.

Movement with chant.

3) ஒரு குடம்

o ru ku Dam
 one pot
 One Pot.

Movement with chant; a line of players passes through an arch made by two players. Then, question-and-answer chant.

4) சந்தனம்

chaṇ tha Nam
 sandalwood ash
 Sandalwood Ash.

Question-and-answer chain-chant, with illustrative gestures.

5) என்ன?

en na
 what
 What Kind Of?

Question-and-answer chain-chant, with illustrative gestures.

6) என் திருக்கு?

en thi ruk ku

What use

What Use?

Question-and-answer chain-chant, with illustrative gestures.

7) தாக்கா!

thaak kaa

please give

Please Give!

Conversational dramatic interaction between two participants at a time, with the interaction working its way around the ring (all are sitting). Then, the ring rotates, with chant.

8) மந்தி சாடி

man thi chaa Di

monkey jumping

Monkey Jumping.

Finger-walk routine, with chant.

9) உருண்டோடா

u ruN Doo
 rolling
 Rolling.

Chant, with finger-tapping on the back of one bent-over player in the center of the ring.

10) முள்ளிக்க

muL Lik ka
 a fruit with thorns on the plant
 A Fruit.

Counting-out game on the ground, with the participants in a ring.

11) கொலையா

ko lai yaa
 a bunch
 A Bunch.

Movement with chant. One participant circles the ring in which others are sitting.

Chasing occurs during part of the activity, thus the activity is a game.

12) ஆடு புளி

aa Tu pu Li

goat and tiger

Goat and Tiger.

Movement with question-and-answer chant. One participant circles the ring in which others are standing; one participant is inside the ring. Chasing occurs during part of the activity, thus the activity is a game.

13) முத்தி, முத்தி

mut thi mut thi

frog, frog

Frog, Frog.

Movement with chant.

14) உண்ணி, உண்ணி

uN Ni uN Ni

tick, tick

Tick, Tick.

Movement with chant.

Of the 14 activities:

Six feature question-and-answer chants (3, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12).

Six feature a ring (1, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12).

One features line-through-an-arch movement (3).

Two feature chasing (11, 12).

Six could be called singing-games (1, 2, 3, 7, 11, 12).

Notes about the 14 Songs/Chants/Dances/Games, and the Way They are Represented in this Dissertation.¹

The 14 songs/chants/dances/games came mostly from these young boys of Vellambi (in alphabetical order): Arun, Baiju, Pradesh, Saju, Saravanan, Surendiran, and Vijay. These young girls of Vellambi also helped: Chitra, Jayashree, Kavitra, Rajaswari, Ramya, and Santhia. Rajammal, Murugan, and Banu gave corrections, guidance, and support to these child players.

The texts that follow are presented phonetically as the children spoke, chanted, and sung them. This is not literary Tamil, and it is not standard spoken Tamil.

¹ Video recordings of the 14 songs/chants/dances/games can be accessed through <http://www.storytellingandvideoconferencing.com/333.html> .

Rather, it is a Kanyakumari district dialect of Tamil, with numerous word endings being nasalized, and with numerous Malayalam words.

An aspect of the *Performance-centered approach to folklore* has been experimentation in ways of representing verbal arts activities in print: “Folklore texts require proxemic, kinesic, paralinguistic, and interactional descriptions, all of which might provide clues to the principles underlying the communicative processes of folklore and its performing attributes” (Ben-Amos and Goldstein 1975, p. 4).

The production of texts of verbal performances has always been at the heart of the discipline of folklore (Fine 1984, p. 3). However textualization in general became to some degree a suspect activity in the 1960s and 1970s. Textmaking is about the striving for permanence, “the transcendence of the flux of the temporal material world: as such, it involves a reduction in material aspects, the translation of oral-physical symbols of artistic verbal performance to the two-dimensional, visual symbols of the printed page” (Fine 1984, p. 5). This reduction ran counter to a major ethos of the 1960s, which involved the discovery and celebration of the emergent nature of all culture and reality. Thus, at least one folklorist expressed pessimism about, and distaste for, the textualization process: “The validity of expressive man is thus deadened...by folklorists, fixing the transient and transitional out of a need for the objective scholar to describe

and compare through the medium of the written word and the printed page” (Abrahams 1977, as cited in Fine 1984, p. 15).

Beginning with the question, “How can the text be made a more adequate communication tool?,” textmakers have experimented with various paralinguistic and kinesic notations, and with styles of photography, typography, and layout. Some text styles are designed to embody the presentational style of the original performance (Hymes 1981, 2000; Tedlock 1971, 1972, 1983). This field has been labeled as *ethnopoetics*. “Practitioners of ethnopoetics treat the relationship between performance and text as a field for experimentation” (Tedlock 1992, p. 82).

In the 1970s, Dennis Tedlock and Jerome Rothenberg, with assistance from various other scholars and poets, published a magazine of ethnopoetics, *Alcheringa* (1970-3, 1975-80). “Alcheringa” is an Australian aboriginal word for a realm of dream. *Alcheringa* was a combined scholarly, poetic, and activist project. It identified the modern poet-scholar with the tribal -- both being marginal to the great institutions of the dominant cultures of the present day -- and called for the breakdown of barriers between all of the senses, and between all of the arts. Ethnopoetics can also be considered as part of the *concrete poetry movement*, which stresses the way printed poetry is visually composed on a page.

In *Alcheringa* and in more academic contexts, Tedlock developed and discussed various ways of indicating paralinguistic qualities (Tedlock 1971, 1972, 1983). For example, capital letters could indicate raised volume; two dots could indicate a two-second pause; italics could indicate slow, precise enunciation; and so on. This was called *scoring* a text.

Scholars such as Dell Hymes and Ray Birdwhistell have developed specialized coding systems to represent aural and physical behavior (Hymes 1975; Birdwhistell 1970). In addition, *Labanotation* and other systems have been developed to represent dance movement. Alan Lomax developed *Cantometrics*, a system of classifying singing styles¹; and *Choreometrics*, a system of classifying dance-movement styles.

Translation from one language to another -- English often being the terminal language -- is often a part of folklore scholarship textmaking. Publications involving translation often display complete sentences or paragraphs of the original text and/or transliteration first (on the left, or on the top); the English translation then follows on the right or beneath. This makes efforts by the reader to ascertain word-for-word correspondence between the source material and the translation difficult or impossible. In this dissertation, the following four-level "inter-textual" presentation system is used, which resolves this dilemma:

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cantometrics> .

- 1) Tamil.
- 2) Transliteration (International Phonetic System, Latin Alphabet). (Phonetic.)
- 3) Word-for-word translation (English). (Semantic.)
- 4) Colloquial sentence translation (English). (Syntax.)

The transliteration appears directly under the Tamil letters, syllable by syllable; and the word-for-word translation appears directly under the transliteration.

This system does not address aesthetic aspects of performance. This method of representation concerns translation from one language to another, not transposition from the spoken to the written. In my experience to date in textualizing Tamil verbal arts for an English-reading audience, the translation issue has taken precedence over the transposition issue. What this system does for the English reader is demystify the foreign language. Reading these four levels, functions as a language lesson. This system makes the translation process transparent.

The letters and words of the 14 songs/chants/dances/games printed in this dissertation are direct phonetic transcriptions of what was spoken and sung during the performances that were recorded in Vellambi. This speech and song is not standard spoken Tamil in numerous ways. For one thing, in this region of Tamil Nadu, the ends of spoken words are often nasalized. There are numerous

other local pronunciations, and slang contractions and terms in these lyrics.

Some commentary is given regarding these usages (please see pp. 241-2), but this is not done in all cases.

For each of the 14 songs/chants/dances/games, the following are given:

- a) English Translation.
- b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.
- c) Tamil.
- d) English Translation, with Movements.
- e) Genre.
- f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.
- g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

1)

ஒரு கல்லு
 o ru kal lu
 one stone
 One Stone.



Activity 1. (Figure 8.)



Activity 1. (Figure 9.)

a) English Translation.

One stone, pick up,
One stone, throw.

One thousand parrots, having jumped, are flying.
One thousand parrots, having jumped, are flying.

Dancing parrot, singing parrot,
Flying to the temple.

The parrot is flying to the temple,
Flying in the sky.

The parrot is flying to the temple,
Flying in the sky.

The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

two	two thousand
three	three thousand
four	four thousand
five	five thousand

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

ஒரு கல்லு எடுக்கவெ,
 o ru kal lu e Duk ka ve
 one stone to pick up
 One stone, pick up,

ஒரு கல்லு எறியவெ.
 o ru kal lu e Ri ya ve
 one stone to throw
 One stone, throw,

ஒராயிரம் கிளி தாவி பறக்கவெ,
 o raa yi ram ki Li thaa vi pa Rak ka ve
 one thousand parrot having jumped to fly
 One thousand parrots, having jumped, are flying.

ஒராயிரம் கிளி தாவி பறக்கவெ,
 o raa yi ram ki Li thaa vi pa Rak ka ve
 one thousand parrot having jumped to fly

ஆட கிளி, பாட கிளி
 aa Da ki Li paa Da ki Li
 to dance parrot to sing parrot
 Dancing parrot, singing parrot,

அம்பலம் பறக்கவெ.
 am ba lam pa Rak ka ve
 temple to fly
 Flying to the temple.

அம்பலம் பறக்கும் கிளி,
 am ba lam pa Rak kum ki Li
 temple is flying parrot
 The parrot is flying to the temple,

ஆகாயம் பறக்கவெ.
 aa haa yam pa Rak ka ve
 sky to fly
 Flying in the sky.

அம்பலம் பறக்கும் கிளி,
 am ba lam pa Rak kum ki Li
 temple is flying parrot
 The parrot is flying to the temple,

ஆகாயம் பறக்கவெ.
 aa haa yam pa Rak ka ve
 sky to fly
 Flying in the sky.

The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

ரெண் டு
 reN Du
 two

ரெண் டாயிரம்
 reN Daa yi ram
 two thousand

மூனு
 muu Nu
 three

மூணாயிரம்
 muu Naa yi ram
 three thousand

நாலு
naa lu
four

நாலாயிரம்
naa laa yi ram
four thousand

அஞ்சி
anj ji
five

அஞ்சாயிரம்
anj jaa yi ram
five thousand

c) Tamil.

ஒரு கல்லு எடுக்கவெ,
ஒரு கல்லு எறியவெ.

ஒராயிரம் கிளி தாவி பறக்கவெ,
ஒராயிரம் கிளி தாவி பறக்கவெ.

ஆட கிளி, பாட கிளி,
அம்பலம் பறக்கவெ.

அம்பலம் பறக்கும் கிளி,
ஆகாயம் பறக்கவெ.

அம்பலம் பறக்கும் கிளி,
ஆகாயம் பறக்கவெ.

The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

ரெண் டு	ரெண் டாயிரம்
முணு	முணாயிரம்
நாலு	நாலாயிரம்
அஞ்சி	அஞ்சாயிரம்

d) English Translation, with Movements.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Movements</u>
	<i>The players stand in a circle, each facing the center of the circle.</i>
One stone, pick up,	<i>Each player gestures with his/her right hand, as if to pick up a stone in the center of the circle.</i>
One stone, throw.	<i>Each player gestures with his/her right hand, as if to throw towards the center of the circle.</i>
One thousand parrots, having jumped, are flying. (Repeat.)	<i>Each player pivots 90 degrees rightward, so as to face the back of a player next to him/her in the circle. All walk, causing the circle to rotate, while gently flapping their arms, as if to fly.</i>
Dancing parrot, singing parrot, Flying to the temple,	
The parrot is flying to the temple, Flying in the sky. (Repeat.)	

e) Genre.

Ring singing-game.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

Two ways that players of this activity physically interact with each other are: 1) they gesture as if to throw stones towards the center of the ring (and towards the player on the opposite side of the ring); and then, 2) each player follows the next in the ring, causing the ring to rotate. Thus, there is alternation between these two orientations (center and forward). Remembering these two modes of interaction is a memory exercise.

Words and movements occur together in this activity when these words are sung:

- 1) Picking up a stone.
- 2) Throwing a stone.
- 2) Flying.

Repetition with variation (through substitution of words in a phrase) occurs in this activity when these words are sung:

- 1) Successive numbers (one, two, etc.).
- 2) Two different forms of a number (one and one-thousand, two and two-thousand, etc.).
- 3) “One stone, pick up; One stone, throw.”

The verbal imagery of this activity presents a mix of nature (stones, parrots, and sky) and culture (temples, which are human-made structures).

Inert matter (stones) are activated, animated by the players' acts of picking up and throwing the stones. These pieces of inert matter are given movement and become airborne -- and then in a sense become parrots, as the next thing we hear of are parrots flying to and around a temple. This progression can be seen as a demonstration of the power of human movement to pass life into inert objects. In this activity the mystery of life is also related to the divine: the parrots are flying to a temple, which is also made of inert matter, but which is imbued with divine life, power, and action.

One stone is mentioned, and then in the next line, one thousand parrots are mentioned. Here the activity teaches the difference between the concepts of one,

and one-thousand. In successive verses, the one and one-thousand is substituted with two and two-thousand, three and three-thousand, and so on. How does one stone become one-thousand parrots? Somehow, the action of picking up and throwing the stone transforms the single stone into a flock of birds. That is, the animating of a stone by placing human energy into it, poetically or mystically, transforms a single inanimate object into a multitude of living beings. This teaches a lesson of the power of human action, especially in relation to seemingly inanimate things.

The thousand parrots are personified as singing and dancing. Then they are flying to a temple. Why do the parrots fly to the temple? They represent the players, and seem to express the mystical concept that nature, animals, and people are imbued with divine consciousness.

Numerous Kani folktales and legends involve people being able to turn into animals, especially birds. Also, some Kani manthirams (sacred chants) -- which are held very secret and are considered to be a very serious matter -- are said to enable the speaker to become an animal. Such stories and manthirams, like this simple children's song-dance, can be interpreted on mystical and poetic levels to express the Kani sense of humans' closeness with nature and the divine; that humans, animals, and the divine are all parts of a single continuum.

The lyrics shift between the infinitive form, such as

ஆட
aa Da
to dance

பறக்க வெ
pa Rak ka ve
to fly

(here “வெ” [“ve”] is added as an emphatic marker),

and --

the relative participle form, which also implies the future tense,

பறக்கும்
pa Rak kum
is flying, will fly

This alternating of tense gives multi-perspective senses, contributing to the dreamlike way in which the player-stones-birds-temple continuum occurs.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

“Ring around the Rosie” is similar in that it is also involves a ring that rotates.

However, a difference between the two activities is that “One Stone” features

alternation between players rotating the circle, and gesturing toward the center of the circle; while in “Ring around the Rosie” there is alternation between players rotating the circle, and falling to the ground.

2)

ஒண்ணாம் பாத்தி
 oN Naam paat thi
 one garden
 One Garden.



Activity 2. (Figure 10.)



Activity 2. (Figure 11.)



Activity 2. (Figure 12.)



Activity 2. (Figure 13.)

a) English Translation.

In one garden, a section of a garden,
One hundred sprouts are growing.

A seed, a bean, and young women came,
Having sung, having danced, hit the parrot.

The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

two	two hundred
three	three hundred
four	four hundred
five	five hundred

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

ஒண்ணாம் பாத்தி, மொளம் பாத்தி,

oN Naam paat thi mo Lam paat thi
one garden a section of a garden

In one garden, a section of a garden,

ஒந்நூற்றி மொளயும் கூம்பளந்து.

oṅ nuuT Ti mo La yum kuum ba Lan̄ thu
one hundred sprouts growing

One hundred sprouts are growing.

யாவர தொவர கன்னி மாரு வந்து,
 yaa va ra tho va ra kan ni maa ru vanu thu
 a seed a bean young women (plural) came
 A seed, a bean, and young women came,

ஆடி பாடி, கிளி அடிச்சா!
 aa Di paa Di ki Li a Dic chaa
 having danced having sung parrot hit
 Having sung, having danced, hit the parrot.

The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

ரெண்டாம்
 reN Daam
 two

ரெண்டுற்றி
 reN DuuT Ti
 two hundred

முணாம்
 muu Naam
 three

முணூற்றி
 muu Nuut Ti
 three hundred

நாலாம்
 naa laam
 four

நாலூற்றி
 naa luuT Ti
 four hundred

அஞ்சாம்
 anj jaam
 five

அஞ்சூற்றி
 anj juuT Ti
 five hundred

c) Tamil.

ஒண்ணாம் பாத்தி மொளம் பாத்தி,
ஒந்நூற்றி மொளயும் கூம்பளந்து.
 யாவர தொவர கன்னி மாரு வந்து,
 ஆடி பாடி கிளி அடிச்சா!

The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

ரெண்டாம்	ரெண்டீற்றி
முணாம்	முணூற்றி
நாலாம்	நாலூற்றி
அஞ்சாம்	அஞ்சூற்றி

d) English Translation, with Movements.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Movements</u>
In one garden, a section of a garden,	<i>The players face forward, and swing their arms forward and backward (as if to enact sowing seeds),</i>
One hundred sprouts are growing.	<i>The players squat (as if to enact a sleeping baby, or an unsprouted seed), placing the palms of one's hands together, on the left side of one's face.</i>
A seed, a bean, and young women came,	<i>The players stand up.</i>
Having sung,	<i>The players extend their left arms to the side,</i>
having danced,	<i>The players extend their right arms to the side,</i>
hit the parrot.	<i>The players jump up into the air, and clap their hands above their heads.</i>

e) Genre.

Movement with chant.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

This activity provides a good physical workout. First the movement is forward and backward; then, left and right; and finally, up and down. There is alternation and symmetry.

Words and movements occur together in this activity when these words are sung:

“Having sung, having danced, hit the parrot.”

Instances in which there is repetition with variation (through substitution of words in a phrase) in this activity are:

- 1) Successive numbers (one, two, etc.).
- 2) Two different forms of a number (one and one-thousand, two and two-thousand, etc.).
- 2) “Having sung, having danced.”

The song refers to planting seeds and tending to an agricultural area. When the players sing about the seeds, the players squat and curl up into a fetal position, enacting the seeds that have been planted in the earth. The subsequent jumping and clapping motion enacts an attempt to chase away birds away who might eat the recently-planted seeds.

Thus, in this brief activity, the players role play a series of three roles: 1) a human planting the seeds, 2) the seeds in the earth, and 3) the human again, this time protecting the seeds from the intruding birds.

Birds seeking to interfere with planted seeds, and the need to chase away such birds, is a popular theme in children's songs. In such cases: orderly, planned, patient, protective, and nurturing behavior -- planting seeds and helping them to grow -- is in danger of being disrupted by wild and predatory birds. This distinction could teach children the difference between disciplined and disruptive behavior -- and could remind them of their (the children's) vulnerable state and their need for parental and community protection. In the instance of the Korean song whose lyrics appear below, the bird threat is remedied by setting a trap. The solution in the Indian song -- jumping up to hit the bird -- is more exuberant.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

Korea.

(Kim, 1998, p. 146.)

“Bird Song.”

Went to the market, Sonnae Market,
Sonnae Market, there went I,
Buckwheat seeds, a jar to buy.
In the garden spread it out.
The birds come, the birds go.
They ate all the buckwheat,
Now I have none.
To catch the bird, I set a rope trap,
I caught all the birds inside my trap.
Cchi-gu-rang, bird in my trap,
Cchi-gu-ran, cchi-gu-ran, cchi-gu-ran, cchaeng.

The last line represents chirping sounds.

USA.

Jumping Jack.

This is a classic callisthenic exercise, consisting of alternation between two positions: legs apart, and arms to the side directed upward and outward; and legs together, and arms to the side directed downward. (Calisthenics are a form of exercise performed without equipment, using the weight of one's own body for resistance.)

3)

ஒரு கூடம்
o ru kuu Dam
one pot
One Pot.



Activity 3. (Figure 14.)



Activity 3. (Figure 15.)



Activity 3. (Figure 16.)

a) English Translation.

Bring one pot of water,
One flower will grow.

The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

two

three

four

five

The following questions are spoken by the players in the line, who are now would-be rescuers gathered around the two arch-forming players who have caught a player from the line.

The answers are spoken by the two arch-forming players.

How much money do we have to give,
so that you will release him, you fools?
I won't give, you long-haired men.

The would-be rescuers chant the above question five times, with arms successively wider apart.

If we give this mountain or that mountain in writing,
will you release him, you fools?
I won't give, you long-haired men.

If we make a thin-brick house for you,
will you release him, you fools?
I won't give, you long-haired men.

If we make a palm-leaf house for you,
will you release him, you fools?
I won't give, you long-haired men.

If we make a brick-and-cement house for you,
will you release him, you fools?
I won't give, you long-haired men.

If we make a two-story house for you,
will you release him, you fools?
I won't give, you long-haired men.

What do you want?
Give me some betel nuts.¹

¹ Betal nuts are often chewed by adults in south India. The taste is somewhat bitter.

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

ஒரு கூடம் தண்ணி கோரி,
 o ru kuu Dam thaN Ni koo ri
 one pot water having brought
 One pot of water bring

ஒரு பூ பூத்தாச்சி.
 o ru puu puut thaach chi
 one flower bloomed
 One flower grows

The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

ரெண்டு
 reN Du
 two

மூன்று
 muu Nu
 three

நாலு
 naa lu
 four

அஞ்சி
 anj ji
 five

The following questions are spoken by the players in the line, who are now would-be rescuers gathered around the two arch-forming players who have caught a player from the line.

The answers are spoken by the two arch-forming players.

இம்பிடுக்கு பணம்
 im bi Duk ku pa Nam
 how much money

தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
 tha rang vi Du Daa ma Dai yaa
 give release fools

How much money do we have to give, so that you will release him, you fools?

விடமாட்டேன் சடையா.
 vi Da maaT Teenj cha Dai yaa
 I won't give long-haired men
 I won't give, you long-haired men.

The would-be rescuers chant the above question five times, with arms successively wider apart.

இந்தமல அந்தமல எழுதி
 in tha ma la an tha ma la e LRZu thi
 this mountain that mountain having written

தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
 tha rang vi Du Daa ma Dai yaa
 give release fools

If we give this mountain or that mountain in writing, will you release him, you fools?

விடமாட்டேஞ் சடையா.
 vi Da maaT Teenj cha Dai yaa
 I won't give long-haired men
 I won't give, you long-haired men.

ஓட்டு வீடு கட்டி
 oT Tu vii Du kaT Ti
 thin-brick house make

தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
 tha rang vi Du Daa ma Dai yaa
 give release fools

If we make a thin-brick house for you, will you release him, you fools?

விடமாட்டேஞ் சடையா.
 vi Da maaT Teenj cha Dai yaa
 I won't give long-haired men
 I won't give, you long-haired men.

ஓல வீடு கட்டி
 oo la vii Du kaT Ti
 palm-leaf house make

தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
 tha rang vi Du Daa ma Dai yaa
 give release fools

If we make a palm-leaf house for you, will you release him, you fools?

விடமாட்டேன் சடையா.
 vi Da maaT Teenj cha Dai yaa
 I won't give long-haired men
 I won't give, you long-haired men.

மாடி வீடு கட்டி
 maa Di vii Du kaT Ti
 brick-and-cement house make

தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
 tha rang vi Du Daa ma Dai yaa
 give release fools

If we make a brick-and-cement house for you, will you release him, you fools?

விடமாட்டேன் சடையா.
 vi Da maaT Teenj cha Dai yaa
 I won't give long-haired men
 I won't give, you long-haired men.

அடுக்கு மாடி வீடு கட்டி
 a Duk ku maa Di vii Du kaT Ti
 two-story brick-and-cement house make

தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
 tha rang vi Du Daa ma Dai yaa
 give release fools

If we make a two-story brick-and-cement house for you, will you release him, you fools?

விடமாட்டேன் சடையா.
 vi Da maaT Teenj cha Dai yaa
 I won't give long-haired men
 I won't give, you long-haired men.

எந்திரு வேணும்?
 en thi ru vee Num
 what want
 What do you want?

என்னக்கு வெற்ற இடிச்சி
 en nak ku veT Ta i Dich chi
 to me betal nuts having crushed

தரணும்.
 tha ra Num
 give

Give me some betal nuts.

c) Tamil.

ஒரு கூடம் தண்ணி கோரி,
ஒரு பூ பூத்தாச்சி.

The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

ரெண் டு

முணு

நாலு

அஞ்சி

The following questions are spoken by the players in the line, who are now would-be rescuers gathered around the two arch-forming players who have caught a player from the line.

The answers are spoken by the two arch-forming players.

இம்பிடுக்கு பணம்
தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
விடமாட்டேஞ் சடையா.

The would-be rescuers chant the above question five times, with arms successively wider apart.

இந்தமல அந்தமல எழுதி
தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
விடமாட்டேஞ் சடையா.

ஓட்டு வீடு கட்டி
தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
விடமாட்டேஞ் சடையா.

ஓல வீடு கட்டி
 தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
 விடமாட்டேஞ் சடையா.

மாடி வீடு கட்டி
 தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
 விடமாட்டேஞ் சடையா.

அடுக்கு மாடி வீடு கட்டி
 தரங் விடுடா, மடையா?
 விடமாட்டேஞ் சடையா.

எந்திரு வேணும்?
 எள்ளக்கு வெற்ற இடிச்சி தரணும்.

d) English Translation, with Movements.

Words

One pot of water bring,
One flower grows.

Two pots of water bring,
Two flowers grow.

Three pots of water bring,
Three flowers grow. (*etc.*)

How much money do we have to give,
so that you will release him, you fools?
 I won't give, you long-haired
 men.
(5 times)

If we give this mountain or that
mountain in writing, will you release
him, you fools?
 I won't give, you long-haired
 men.

Movements

*Two of the taller players form an arch.
The remaining players form a line.*

*The line moves through the arch,
alternating between weaving to the
right and left.*

*After five pots of water and five flowers
are mentioned, the two players who
have formed the arch lower their arms
to capture one person in the line.*

*The other members of the line gather
around the two hostage-holders and
their hostage, and chant --*

*Each successive time the would-be
rescuers chant this line, they stretch
their arms out wider, indicating more
and more money.*

*The would-be rescuers gesture to this
side and that side as they mention the
two mountains.*

If we make a thin-brick house for you,
will you release him, you fools?

I won't give, you long-haired
men.

*The would-be rescuers gesture to
indicate a house between their hands
as they mention the houses.*

If we make a palm-leaf house for you,
will you release him, you fools?

I won't give, you long-haired
men.

If we make a brick-and-cement house
for you, will you release him, you fools?

I won't give, you long-haired
men.

If we make a two-story house for you,
will you release him, you fools?

I won't give, you long-haired
men.

What do you want?

Give me some betal nuts.

*Upon hearing the request for betal
nuts, the players in the outer circle
mime placing betal nuts into the
mouths of the two players who have
been holding the hostage. As this is
done, the hostages are released.*

e) Genre.

Line passing through arch singing-game. Then, question-and-answer chant.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

This activity is composed of two sections: the line-through-the-arch section, and the question-and-answer section.

Repetition with variation (through substitution of words in a phrase) occurs in the line-through-the-arch section of the activity, when successive numbers are sung, regarding both a pot of water and a flower.

Repetition with variation occurs in the question-and-answer section in regard to what is offered to the hostage-holders: increasing amounts of money, mountains, and then various types of houses. The five successively larger amounts of money are indicated by not by variations in words, but by variations in gesture (arms wider apart each time).

A bucket of water comes, then a flower grows. This teaches the principle of causality. In a sense, the resulting action is a repetition-with-variation of the causing action. This sense may in part be intimated by how the second phrase (a flower grows) is a repetition of the first (a pot is brought) in three formal ways: both phrases describe an action; and both phrases feature the same rhythm and melody.

The question-and-answer section of the activity gives players practice in negotiating: asking for things, refusing to give things, and changing offers. For the release of the hostage, the players who formed the line offer a series of grandiose offers, all of which are insultingly refused by the hostage-holders. The would-be rescuers finally ask, "What do you want?" The hostage-holders reply, "betal nuts." The hostage-rescuers immediately gesture as if to place the leaves in the mouths of the hostage-holders, and the prisoners are released. The negotiation process is thus finally resolved through a drastic change of subject: from the grandiose and distant (money, which is produced far away; mountains, which are far away; and houses, which require a relatively long time and the satisfying of many conditions to build), to the small and immediate which are experienced through touch, taste, and smell (betal nuts).

This change of subject is accompanied by a change in communication mode: from speaking alone to also the miming placing something in the mouths of the hostage-holders.

A number of messages about negotiation are communicated in this activity. For examples: The grand offers are refused. It may be that the hostage-holders do not believe that the would-be hostage-rescuers can or will follow through and deliver the huge payments that they are offering. To give money is to use an abstract form of payment, which is organized by the Government. To transfer

ownership of a mountain or any other land territory also requires involvement from the Government -- including confirmation that the one who would give the land actually owns the land in the first place. To deal with writing (the deed, and one's signature on it) is to stray from the locally-produced methods of communication, which are oral Kani Pasai and body language. Government land records and literacy are realms beyond the expertise and control of everyday Kani life.

The activity teaches the supplicant party in a negotiation to not just make a series of offers, but to actually ask what the other party wants. As it happens, the recipients-to-be finally ask for, and are given, a very humble payment. This payment has the advantage of being something that is readily available, having been locally produced. Thus, the requesters are requesting something that the givers-to-be are actually capable of producing. This payment also has the advantage of being appropriate, in the correct scale for the situation. The earlier grand are obviously and comically out of proportion to the correct payment, which would be almost nothing. Something that a child might infer from this dialogue is that if one pays much too little, or much too much, for something, there may be negative repercussions, such as that one of the parties in the transaction might be unsatisfied, and might complain, and might try to re-open the situation later. The best way to avoid such social messiness and unpleasantness is to avoid inappropriate deals in the first place.

The appropriate matching of things or actions is also a theme of the first section of the activity (a bucket of water, and a flower growing). A message here is that a thing needs to be paired with the correct thing -- and the correct amount of that thing -- to achieve the desired result.

f) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

The formation of a line-passing-under-an-arch, with the arch coming down and capturing someone, appears in singing-games in many cultures around the world (including three for whom the words are given below: "London Bridge," "Oranges and Lemons," and "Rice Song"). Thus, it is likely that this formation is an archetypal human universal, coming to being independently in different locations.

Even if, for example, hundreds of years ago the formation of England's "London Bridge" had been learned by Indian children and had been incorporated into their play -- or if the formation of India's "One Pot" had been learned by British children and had been incorporated in their play -- it is very unlikely that we today could

successfully trace such developments.¹ This is because it has only been very recently that scholars have begun to consider children's physical behavior during their songs to be worthy of documentation.

And yet, the list of the various possible materials that could be used to re-build London Bridge in "London Bridge" is suspiciously similar to the list of types of house that could be built in the question-and-answer section of "One Pot." And "London Bridge" ends with the words, "Give him a pipe to smoke all night" -- this shift from the grandiose and distant, to the immediate and sensual, is unmistakably similar to the shift at the end of "One Pot, in which betel nuts are mentioned.

In addition, England's "Watch and Chain" (also below; although it is not a line-passing-under-an-arch activity) features a hostage negotiation that is strikingly similar to the hostage negotiation in "One Pot." Nevertheless, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to explain these similarities -- this dissertation can only observe them.

¹ England began its occupation of India in the early 1600s. The earliest printed English version of "London Bridge" seems to be in *Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book*, in 1744.

British Isles.

(Opie and Opie 1951, pp. 270-6.)

“London Bridge.”

London Bridge is broken down,
Falling down, falling down.
London Bridge is falling down,
My fair lady.

Build it up with wood and clay,
Wood and clay, wood and clay,
Build it up with wood and clay,
My fair lady.

Wood and clay will wash away,
Wash away, wash away,
Wood and clay will wash away,
My fair lady.

Build it up with bricks and mortar,
Bricks and mortar, bricks and mortar,
Build it up with bricks and mortar,
My fair lady.

Bricks and mortar will not stay,
Will not stay, will not stay,
Bricks and mortar will not stay,
My fair lady.

Build it up with iron and steel,
Iron and steel, iron and steel,
Build it up with iron and steel,
My fair lady.

Iron and steel will bend and bow,
Bend and bow, bend and bow,
Iron and steel will bend and bow,

My fair lady.
Build it up with silver and gold,
Silver and gold, silver and gold,
Build it up with silver and gold,
My fair lady.

Silver and gold will be stolen away,
Stolen away, stolen away,
Silver and gold will be stolen away,
My fair lady.

Set a man to watch all night,
Watch all night, watch all night,
Set a man to watch all night,
My fair lady.

Suppose the man should fall asleep,
Fall asleep, fall asleep,
Suppose the man should fall asleep?
My fair lady.

Give him a pipe to smoke all night,
Smoke all night, smoke all night,
Give him a pipe to smoke all night,
My fair lady.

These words train children to search among all available options, and to foresee difficulties that might come with each option.

“London Bridge” sometimes ends with the players dividing into two groups, which then perform a “tug of war” (players stationed on opposite sides of a rope seek to pull the rope, and the opposing players, in their direction -- when one side succeeds to a defined degree, the game is won).

British Isles.

(Opie and Opie 1985, p. 68.)

“Watch and Chain.”

Robbers line:

How many pounds will set us free,
Free, free, free, free, free?
How many pounds will set us free,
My fair lady?

Other line:

A hundred pounds will set you free,
Free, free, free, free, free.
A hundred pounds will set you free,
My fair lady?

Robbers line:

We have not a hundred pounds,
Pounds, pounds, pounds, pounds, pounds?
We have not a hundred pounds,
My fair lady.

Other line:

Then to prison you must go,
Go, go, go, go, go
Then to prison you must go,
My fair lady.

In this singing-game, two lines of singing players approach and move away from each other.

Northern Ireland.

Students of the Omagh School.

“Oranges and Lemons.”

Oranges and lemons,
Say the bells of St Clement’s.
You owe me five farthings,
Say the bells of St Martin’s.
When will you pay me?,
Say the bells of Old Bailey.
When I grow rich,
Say the bells of Shoreditch.
When will that be?,
Say the bells of Stepney.
I’m sure I don’t know,
Says the Great Bell of Bow.

Here comes a candle to light you to bed,
And here comes a chopper to chop off your head.

The words of this activity were sent to us in Chennai by the students in Northern Ireland who would be participating with us in the May 2006 Megaconference Jr. videoconference (for the full page of lyrics sent to us in Chennai from the Omagh school, please see Figure 51, p. 506).

“Oranges and Lemons” features a line of players that moves under an arch formed by two other players. When the arch is lowered on a player in the line, that player must choose to be on one side or the other (oranges or lemons), and finally there is a tug-of-war between the two sides.

Thailand.

(Phoasavadi and Campbell, 2003, p. 31.)

“Rice Song.”

The rice is oval-shaped.

There are two cups of unhusked rice.

Select and stitch together the palm leaves.

Mind the last person --

Trap him and keep him.

The arch comes down as the last line is chanted.

4)

சந்தணம்

chan_ tha Nam
sandalwood ash
Sandalwood Ash.



Activity 4. (Figure 17.)

a) English Translation.

- 1
Will the sandalwood ash not have smell?
For smell, it is dried fish.
- 2
Will the dried fish not be beaten softly?
For beating softly, it is the goldsmith.
- 3
Will the goldsmith not beat loudly?
For beating loudly, it is the temple.
- 4
Will the temple not worship?
For worshipping, it is the king.
- 5
Will the king not speak?
For speaking, it is the lizard.
- 6
Will the lizard not hide?
For hiding, it is the thief.
- 7
Will the thief not run?
For running, it is water.
- 8
Will the water not hang?
For hanging, it is the coconut.
- 9
Will the coconut not guard?
For guarding, it is the bat.
- 10
Will the bat not catch?
For catching, it is hunting.

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

1

சந்தணம் இன்னும் நாறாதோ?

chan tha Nam in num naa Raa thoo
sandalwood ash not smell

Will the sandalwood ash not have smell?

நாறுவக்கு கருவாடு.

naa Ru vak ku ka ru vaa Du
the smell (for) dried fish

For smell, it is dried fish.

2

கருவாடு ஒண்ணும் காயாதோ?

ka ru vaa Du oN Num kaa yaa thoo
dried fish not beat softly

Will the dried fish not be beaten softly?

காயதுக்கு தட்டனே.

kaa ya thuk ku thaT Ta nee
soft beating (for) goldsmith

For beating softly, it is the goldsmith.

3

தட்டங் ஒண்ணும் கொட்டாதோ?

thaT Tang oN Num koT Taa thoo
goldsmith not beat loudly

Will the goldsmith not beat loudly?

கொட்டுவக்கு கோவிலு

koT Tu vak ku koo vi lu
beating loudly (for) temple

For beating loudly, it is the temple.

4

கொவுலு ஒண்ணும் கும்பிடாதோ?

ko vu lu oN Num kum bi Daa thoo
temple not pray with hands together

Will the temple not worship?

கும்பிடுவக்கு ராசனே.

kum bi Du vak ku raa si nee
praying with hands together (for) king
For worshipping, it is the king.

5

ராசங் ஒண்ணும் பேசுதோ?

raa sang oN num pee sa thoo
king anything say?

Will the king not speak?

பேசுவதற்கு பல்லி.

pee su va thaR ku pal li
speaking (for) lizard
For speaking, it is the lizard.

6

பல்லி ஒண்ணும் பதுங்காதோ?

pal li on num pa thung gaa thoo
lizard not hide

Will the lizard not hide?

பதுங்கக்கு கள்ளனே.

pa thung gak ku kaL La nee
hiding (for) thief
For hiding, it is the thief.

7

கள்ள இன்னும் ஓடாதோ?

kaL La in num o Daa thoo
thief not still run

Will the thief not run?

ஓடுவக்கு தண்ணி.

oo Du vak ku thaN Ni
running (for) water

For running, it is water.

8

தண்ணி ஒண்ணும் தேங்காதோ?

thaN Ni oN Num thoong gaa thoo
water not rest

Will the water not hang?

தூங்குவதுக்கு தேங்கா

thoong gu va thuk ku theeng gaa
resting (for) coconut

For hanging, it is the coconut.

9

தேங்க ஒண்ணும் காவதோ?

theeng ga oN Num kaa va thoo
coconut not guard

Will the coconut not guard?

காவ்வக்கு வவ்வாலு.

kaav vak ku vav vaa lu
guarding (for) bat

For guarding, it is the bat.

10

வவ்வாலு எண்ணும் காவதோ?

vav vaa lu eN Num kaa va thoo
bat not catch

Will the bat not catch?

காவ்வக்கு வேட்டெ.

kaav vak ku veeT Te
catching (for) hunting

For catching, it is hunting.

c) Tamil.

1

சந்தணம் இன்னும் நாறாதோ?

நாறுவக்கு கருவாடு.

2

கருவாடு ஒண்ணும் காயாதோ?

காயதுக்கு தட்டனே.

3

தட்டங் ஒண்ணும் கொட்டாதோ?

கொட்டுவக்கு கோவிலு.

4

கொவுலு ஒண்ணும் கும்பிடாதோ?

கும்பிடுவக்கு ராசனே.

5

ராசங் ஒண்ணும் பேசுதோ?
பேசுவதற்கு பல்லி.

6

பல்லி ஒண்ணும் பதுங்காதோ?
பதுங்கக்கு கள்ளனே.

7

கள்ள இன்னும் ஓடாதோ?
ஓடுவக்கு தண்ணி.

8

தண்ணி ஒண்ணும் தேங்காதோ?
தூங்குவதுக்கு தேங்கா.

9

தேங்க ஒண்ணும் காவதோ?
காவ்வக்கு வவ்வாலு.

10

வவ்வாலு எண்ணும் காவதோ?
காவ்வக்கு வேட்டெ.

d) English Translation, with Movements.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Movements</u>
Will the sandalwood ash not have smell?	<i>Fingers of the right hand in a circular rubbing motion over the left palm.</i>
For smell, it is dried fish.	<i>Fingers of the right hand in a circular rubbing motion over the left palm.</i>
Will the dried fish not be beaten softly?	<i>Fingers of the right hand tap down on the left palm, softly.</i>
For beating softly, it is the goldsmith.	<i>Fingers of the right hand tap down on the left palm, softly.</i>
Will the goldsmith not beat loudly?	<i>Fingers of the right hand form a fist, and tap down on the left palm.</i>
For beating loudly, it is the temple.	<i>Fingers of the right hand form a fist, and tap down on the left palm.</i>
Will the temple not worship?	<i>Fingertips together, as if to pray.</i>
For worshipping, it is the king.	<i>Fingers of the right hand to chin.</i>
Will the king not speak?	<i>Fingers of the right hand to chin.</i>
For speaking, it is the lizard.	<i>First finger of the right hand pointing upwards.</i>

Will the lizard not hide?	<i>Knees bent, elbows apart, fingers of the right hand form a fist which rests in the left hand.</i>
For hiding, it is the thief.	<i>Knees bent, elbows apart, fingers of the right hand form a fist which rests in the left hand.</i>
Will the thief not run?	<i>Running motion (arms and feet go up and down).</i>
For running, it is water.	<i>Gesturing as if to toss forward the water from a pot.</i>
Will the water not hang?	<i>Right hand chops down on upward facing left palm.</i>
For hanging, it is the coconut.	<i>Right hand up with wrist rotating, as if holding a coconut.</i>
Will the coconut not guard?	<i>Right hand up, as if holding a coconut, wrist rotating.</i>
For guarding, it is the bat.	<i>Arms flap, suggesting a flying motion.</i>
Will the bat not catch?	<i>Flying motion.</i>
For catching, it is hunting.	<i>Arms move as if to pull back an arrow, in a bow.</i>

e) Genre.

Question-and-answer chain-chant (with illustrative gestures).

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

In the performance of this question-and-answer chant that I recorded, the leader chanted and the chorus members repeated each line, both questions and answers. This may have been in part because only the leader knew the answers. This activity is a form of riddling. And it is a chain activity: an element of each answer (in this case, the verb) is used to create a new question.

In this chant, from the second line onwards, the leader asks if the previously-mentioned actor would do a certain new action. The answer is no, this actor would not do that new action, but a new and appropriate actor is named to match that new action. The activity seems to teach that each action is related to, and springs from, a particular actor.

One line asks: “For speaking, is it the king?” The answer is: “No, for speaking it is the lizard.” A king is distant, so one does not hear him speak. Small lizards (paLLi), which often come into and out of buildings in south India, are very much a part of most people’s everyday lives. These lizards make clicking sounds, and the number of clicks, and when the clicks are made, are often interpreted as expressing divine will. In sum, this line begins with the distant, exalted, and abstract king and state, and shifts to the immediate and everyday. This movement is similar to the one noted in the question-and-answer section of “One

Pot,” in which the discussion shifts from making a payment with a mountain or a house, to making a payment with a few betal nuts.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

USA.

(Wharton 1979, p. 294.)

“Rock’n Robin” (excerpt).

Your mama’s in the kitchen, ooh, she’s nice.
Your father’s round the corner, just a shooting dice.
Your brother’s in jail, raising a lotta hell.

Each actor is associated with a certain place and action.

USA.

(Wharton 1979, p. 384.)

“Hambone, Hambone.”

Hambone, Hambone, have you heard?
Papa gonna buy you a mocking bird.

And if that mockingbird don’t sing,
Papa gonna buy you a diamond ring.

If that diamond ring don’t shine,
Papa gonna buy you a bottle of wine.

If that bottle of wine breaks,
Papa gonna buy you a Chevrolet.

If that Chevrolet don’t run,
Papa gonna buy you a brand new gun.

If that brand new gun don’t shoot,
Papa gonna buy you a brand new suit.

If that brand new suit don’t fit,
Pappa gonna say, “Goddam, I quit.”

In this song, each thing that Papa buys is named, then the action associated with that thing is named. However, in each case the action is named in the negative (if x does not perform its proper action), and the non-function leads to the mention of the next thing that would be bought. In this song, as in “Sandalwood Ash,” a leading theme is the connection between a person or thing, and what that person or thing does -- and the idea that if a person or thing does not do a certain action, one might determine what person or thing might do that action.

5)

என்ன?

en na

what?

What Kind Of?



Activity 5. (Figure 18.)

a) English Translation.

1
What are you hunting for?
I am hunting for a wild pig.

2
What kind of wild pig?
A town wild pig.

3
What kind of town?
A rice town.

4
What kind of rice?
Golden rice.

5
What kind of gold?
Shining gold.

6
What kind of crow?¹
A dark crow.

7
What kind of pot?²
A cooked-rice pot.

8
What kind of cooked-rice?
Old cooked-rice.

¹ Rhyme -- the Tamil words for “shining gold” (in the previous line) and “crow” sound similar.

² Rhyme -- the Tamil words for “dark” (in the previous line) and “pot” sound similar.

9

What kind of fruit? ¹An unripe banana.

10

What kind of unripe / gravy / goat meat? ²Egg gravy.

11

What kind of egg?

A forest-chicken egg.

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

1

என்ன வேட்டு?

en	na	veeT	Te
what		hunting	

What are you hunting for?

பன்னி வேட்டு.

pan	ni	veeT	Te
pig		hunting	

I am hunting for a wild pig.

¹ Rhyme -- the Tamil words for “old” (in the previous line) and “fruit” sound similar.

² Pun -- the Tamil word, “kaRi,” can mean “unripe,” “gravy,” or “goat meat.”

2

என்ன பன்னி?

en na pan ni
what pig

What kind of wild pig?

ஊர் பன்னி.

uur pan ni
town pig

A town wild-pig.

3

என்ன ஊரு?

en na uu ru
what town

What kind of town?

அரிசி ஊரு.

a ri si uu ru
rice town

A rice town.

4

என்ன அரி?

en na a ri
what rice

What kind of rice?

பொன் அரி.

pon a ri
gold rice

Golden rice.

5

என்ன பொன்னு?

en na pon nu
what gold

What kind of gold?

காக்க பொன்னு.

kaak ka pon nu
shining gold

Shining gold.

6

என்ன காக்கா? ¹

en na kaak kaa
what crow

What kind of crow?

அண்டங் காக்கா.

aN Dang kaak kaa
dark crow

A dark crow.

7

என்ன அண்டம்? ²

en na aN Dam
what pot

What kind of pot?

சோத்தண்டம்.

choot thaN Dam
cooked-rice pot

A cooked-rice pot.

¹ Rhyme -- "kaakka" (in the previous line) and "kaakkaa."

² Rhyme -- "aNDang" (in the previous line) and "aNDam."

8

என்ன சோறு?

en na choo Ru
 what cooked-rice

What kind of cooked-rice?

பழஞ் சோறு.

pa LRZanj choo Ru
 old cooked-rice

Old cooked-rice.

9

என்ன பழம்? ¹

en na pa LRZam
 what fruit

What kind of fruit?

கறி வாழப்பழம்.

ka Ri vaa LRZap pa LRZam
 unripe banana

An unripe banana.

10

என்ன கறி? ²

en na ka Ri
 what unripe / gravy / goat meat?

What kind of unripe / gravy / goat meat?

முட்டை கறி.

muT Te ka Ri
 egg gravy

Egg gravy.

¹ Rhyme -- "paLRZanj" (in the previous line) and "paLRZam."

² Pun -- "kaRi" can mean "unripe," "gravy," and "goat meat."

11

என்ன முட்டெ?

en na muT Te
 what egg

What kind of egg?

கானாங்கோழி முட்டெ.

kaa naang koo LRZHi muT Te
 forest-chicken egg

A forest-chicken egg.

c) Tamil.

1

என்ன வேட்டெ?

பன்னி வேட்டெ.

2

என்ன பன்னி?

ஊர் பன்னி.

3

என்ன ஊரு?

அரிசி ஊரு.

4

என்ன அரி?
பொன் அரி.

5

என்ன பொன்னு?
காக்க பொன்னு.

6

என்ன காக்கா? ¹
அண்டங் காக்கா.

7

என்ன அண்டம்? ²
சோத்தண்டம்.

8

என்ன சோறு?
பழஞ் சோறு.

¹ Rhyme -- “காக்க” and “காக்கா.”

² Rhyme -- “அண்டங்” and “அண்டம்.”

9

என்ன பழம்?¹
கறி வாழப்பழம்.

10

என்ன கறி?
 முட்டெ கறி.²

11

என்ன முட்டெ?
 கானாங்கோழி முட்டெ.

d) English Translation, with Movements.

No standard traditional movements.

e) Genre.

Question-and-answer chain-chant.

¹ Rhyme -- “பழஞ்” and “பழம்.”

² Pun -- “கறி.”

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

As the questions, “What kind of ___?,” are asked, the asker bends his right elbow and raises his right hand, making it into a fist. This gesture often accompanies an emphatic request in Indian culture.

The words of this chant feature numerous changes in subject through rhymes and a pun. This teaches players and listeners that the subject can be changed on aesthetic grounds (sounds), not just on logical or causal grounds. The pun teaches that a word’s meaning is in part supplied by its context in a sentence.

It is amazing to me that the young children who perform this chant seem to understand its rhymes and pun, which change the meaning of what is being spoken about in an instant. These sudden changes contribute to the fun -- and certainly to the linguistic and other cultural educational value -- of the chant.

The first *meaning-changing rhyme* occurs in questions-and-answers nos.

5 and 6: “காக் க” (“kaak-ka”, “shining”), becomes “காக் காக” (“kaak-kaa”, “crow”). This teaches that the length of time that a vowel sound is held can change the meaning of a word (as mentioned, the existence of short and long vowels is a special characteristic of the Tamil language).

The second meaning-changing rhyme occurs in questions-and-answer nos. 6 and 7: “அண்டங்” (“aNDang”, “big”), becomes “அண்டம்” (“aNDam”, “pot”).

The third meaning-changing rhyme occurs in questions-and-answers numbers 8 and 9: “பழஞ்” (“paLRZanj”, “old”), becomes “பழம்” (“paLRZam”, “fruit”).

Then, a meaning-changing pun occurs in questions-and-answers numbers 9 and 10. “கறி” (“kaRi”) is actually a triple pun word: it can mean 1) “unripe” (as in, a fruit that is still green), 2) “gravy” (either vegetarian or non-vegetarian), or 3) “meat” (such as mutton). The meaning is determined by the context, that is, from the words that are used in the phrases along with “ka-Ri”. In the first case, the question-and-answer is “What fruit?, An unripe banana”. Then, in the following question, the meaning of “kaRi” is suddenly different: “What gravy?, Egg gravy”.

In “What Kind Of?,” one word is taken from each answer, and a new question is asked about that word. A similar chain pattern is used in the genre of Bhakti poetry known as “அந்தாதி” (“an_uthaathi”), which was especially employed by the poet, Abirami Pattar (late 1700s - early 1800s). In an_uthaathi, each line begins with the last sound of the previous line. As the discussion of “One Pot” and “London Bridge” raised the question of whether or not the physical and verbal

elements of one of these activities derived from the other activity, the use of verbal chain patterns in “Sandalwood Ash,” “What Kind Of?” (and the next activity, “What Use?”) once again raise the question of origins -- of possible influences from one genre to another, from one level of culture to another, and from one social group to another. It has been posited that women’s lament has been a source for epic (Beissinger, Tylus, and Wofford 1999; Caraveli-Chaves 1980; Holst-Warhaft 1992; Murnaghan 1999; Weinbaum 2001). Similarly, it is possible that children’s chants were noticed by adults who then used variations of the chain form for more refined, formal, professional, ideological, and/or religious public artistic expression. Conversely, in some cases in their play, children may have adopted and adapted forms used in adult verbal arts. It may be that, in regard to forms of songs and poems, some influences have gone in various directions, to and from folk, tribal, popular, classical, and other levels of culture. In recent times, a Tamil television game show concerning cinema songs, “Paattukku Paattu” (பாட டுகு பாட டு”, “paaTTukku paaTTu”) has been built around a version of a chain pattern (here the last note of one song relates to the first note of another song).

Local versions of spoken Tamil often differ from standard spoken and written Tamil especially in regard to matters of pronunciation. The Kani people who performed these songs/chants/dances/games live in southwestern Tamil Nadu,

near the border with Kerala, so their version of Tamil is sometimes flavoured with aspects of the Malayalam language. This is the case with the transliterations of the words for “cooked rice” (“chooRu,” “சேரறு”), and “cooked rice-pot” (“chootthaNDam,” “சேர்த்தண்டம்”), in questions-and-answers Nos. 8 and 7 of “What Kind Of?,” respectively. The standard Tamil pronunciations would be “sooRu” and “sootthaNDam.”

However, sometimes the pronunciations of these folk performers is neither standard Tamil, nor standard Malayam. This is the case in regard to the ending of the word for “hunting” (as found in question-and-answer no. 1 of “What Kind Of?”): The standard written Tamil form of the word is “வேட்டை” (“veeTTai”); a Malayalam-ised pronunciation is “வேட்ட” (“veeTTa”); and the Kani pronunciation is “வேட்டெ” (“veeTTe”), which is nasalized.

The same is the case for the word for “egg” (in question-and-answer no. 11): the standard Tamil is “முட்டை” (“muTTai”); a Malayalam-ised pronunciation is “முட்ட” (“muT-Ta”); and the Kani pronunciation is “முட்டெ” (“muTTe”).

An example of how spoken words are contracted in these activities appears in question-and-answer no. 4 of “What Kind Of?.” Here the word used for rice is

“அரி” (“ari”), which is an abbreviated version of “அரிசி” (“arisi”). The full form of the word is used first, in question-and-answer No. 3.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

South Africa.

(Blacking 1967.)

Venda Children’s Songs.

p. 64.

What did you have for breakfast?
I ate the left-overs.

And with what did you flavour them?
I flavoured them with meat.

With what sort of meat?
With rat’s meat.

Where does this meat come from?
By the other bank of the Luvuvhu (river).

p. 80.

Where has your mother gone?
She has gone to press marula fruit.

What is marula fruit for?
Marula fruit is for drinking.

Shake down the marula fruit!

p. 87.

What did you have for supper yesterday evening?

Porridge.

What did you eat with it?

Meat.

Why don't you cut off a piece for me?

Because there was only very liittle meat.

With whom will you play tomorrow?

With a pot.

What kind of pot?

A soft pot.

How soft?

Soft and supple.

How supple?

As supple as cattle skin.

What kind of cattle?

Black cattle.

How black?

As black as a pit.

What kind of pit?

A maize (corn) pit.

What kind of maize?

River maize.

Korea.

(Kim, 1998, pp. 115-6.)

“Oh, My Tummy.”

Oh, my tummy --
Tummy like a bag.

Which bag?
Bag of jade.

Which jade bag?
Pearl jade bag.

Which pearl jade bag?
K'o-cchin-cchin.

Which kind of nose?
Horse hair nose.

Which kind of headband?
Horsehair headband.

Which kind of horsehair?
Bird hair.

Which kind of bird?
An old bird.

Who is so old?
The bird is old.

For the following two additional similar Tamil chain-chants, the following are given:

- a) English Translation.
- b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.
- c) Tamil.
- d) Commentary on Verbal Content.

என் ன வேண் டும் ?
 en na veeN Dum
 what do you want
 What Do You Want?

This question-and-answer chain-chant was collected from a Tamil parent in Philadelphia.

a) English translation.

- 1 Younger brother, younger brother! (spoken by *Older Brother*)
- 2 What do you want? (spoken by *Younger Brother*)
 I want fruit. (spoken by *Older Brother*)
- 3 What fruit?
 Jack fruit.

4
What jack?
Root jack.

5
What root? ¹
Vetti root.

6
What vetti?
A wood cutter.

7
What wood?
Mango wood.

8
What mango? ²
Mother!

2) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

1
தம்பி, தம்பி, (spoken by *Older Brother*)
tham bi tham bi
younger brother younger brother
Younger brother, younger brother!

¹ Pun -- "veTTi" can mean "a kind of root," "not serious," or "wood cutter."

² Pun -- "maa" can mean "mango" or "mother."

2

என்ன வேண்டும்?

(spoken by *Younger Brother*)

en na veeN Dum
 what do you want
 What do you want?

பழம் வேண்டும்.

(spoken by *Older Brother*)

pa LRZam veeN Dum
 fruit I want
 I want fruit.

3

என்ன பழம்?

en na pa LRZam
 what fruit
 What fruit?

பலா பழம்.

pa laa pa LRZam
 jack fruit
 Jack fruit.

4

என்ன பலா?

en na pa laa
 what jack
 What jack?

வேர் பலா.

veer pa laa
 root jack
 Root jack.

5

என்ன வேர்?

en	na	veer
what		root

What root?

வெட்டி வேர்.

veT	Ti	veer
(a kind of)		root

Vetti root.

6

என்ன வெட்டி? ¹

en	na	veT	Ti
what		veTTi	

What vetti?

விறகு வெட்டி.

vi	Ra	gu	veT	Ti
wood			cutter	

A wood cutter.

7

என்ன விறகு?

en	na	vi	Ra	gu
what		wood		

What wood?

மா விறகு.

maa	vi	Ra	gu
mango	wood		

Mango wood.

¹ Pun -- “வெட்டி” (“veTTi”) can mean “a kind of root,” “not serious,” or “wood cutter.”

8

என்ன மா?¹

en na maa
what mango

What mango?

அம்மா!

am maa
mother
Mother!

c) Tamil.

1

தம்பி, தம்பி,

(spoken by *Older Brother*)

2

என்ன வேண்டும்?

(spoken by *Younger Brother*)

பழம் வேண்டும்.

(spoken by *Older Brother*)

3

என்ன பழம்?

பலா பழம்.

¹ Pun no. 2 -- the Tamil word, "ma," can mean "mango" or "mother."

4

என்ன பலா?

வேர் பலா.

5

என்ன வேர்?

வெட்டி வேர்.

6

என்ன வெட்டி?¹விறகு வெட்டி.

7

என்ன விறகு?

மா விறகு.

8

என்ன மா?²அம்மா!

¹ Pun -- “வெட்டி” (“veTTi”) can mean “a kind of root,” “not serious,” or “wood cutter.”

² Pun -- “மா” (“maa”) can mean “mango” or “mother.”

d) Commentary on Verbal Content.

Three possible meanings of “ veTTi ” are: a kind of root; not serious; and a wood cutter. In question-and-answer 5, “ veTTi ” means a kind of root. In question-and-answer 6, two possible meanings of the question, “What ‘ veTTi ’?”, are: “What kind of ‘ veTTi ’ root?”; or, “Which of the three meanings of ‘ veTTi ’ is meant here?” The answer -- “wood ‘ veTTi ’” -- answers the second of these two questions, telling us that a wood cutter is meant.

This pattern is repeated later in the activity:

Two possible meanings of “ maa ” are: mango; and mother. In question-and-answer 7, “ maa ” means a mango. In question-and-answer 8, two possible meanings of the question, “What ‘ maa ’?”, are: “What kind of mango?”; or, “Which of the two meanings of ‘ maa ’ is meant here?” The answer -- “ ammaa ” -- answers the second of these two questions, telling us that a mother is meant.

These sequences teach that a word may have numerous possible meanings, and that the meaning needs to be announced by the speaker, or be determined by the listener (depending on the words around the word in question). Most of all,

these sequences teach and require the listener to practice mental dexterity and flexibility, and contextual thinking.

என்ன பிஸ்கெட் ?

en na bis keT
what biscuit

What Biscuit?

This question-and-answer chant was collected from children in Ayodhyakuppam (one of Chennai's sea-fishing kuppams). Variations of "What Biscuit?" are very popular in Chennai.

a) English Translation

1

Biscuit, biscuit.

2

What biscuit?

Jam biscuit.

3

What jam?

Tea jam. ¹

4

What tea?

Bun rotti. ²

¹ The answers to the first two questions are given by association: biscuit is joined by jam; and jam is joined by tea.

² Rhyme -- "tea" (in the previous line), and "rotti" a (type of flat bread).

5

What bun?Ribbon.¹

6

What ribbon?

Green ribbon.

7

What green?

Mango green.

8

What mango / mother?²

Teacher mother.

9

What teacher?

Math teacher.

10

What math?

Upper-level math.³

11

What upper-level?

Top upper-level.

12

What top / shaved-head?⁴Palani shaved-head.⁵

13

What Palani?

Vadapalani.⁶

¹ Rhyme -- “bun” (in the previous line), and “ribbon.”

² Pun -- the Tamil word “maa” means “mango” and “mother.”

³ The literal meaning of the Tamil word here, “maaDi” is, the roof of a building.

⁴ Pun -- the Tamil word “moTTai” means “top” and “shaved-head.”

⁵ Palani is a town in southwest Tamil Nadu where people often shave their heads as part of the religious worship.

⁶ Vadapalani is a neighborhood in Chennai.

14
 What vadai? ¹
 Tortoise vadai.

15
 What tortoise?
 Pond tortoise.

16
 What pond?
 Cloth-wick pond.

17
 What cloth-wick?
 Oil-lamp cloth-wick. ²

18
 What oil-lamp?
 Standing oil-lamp.

19
 What standing / punch? ³
 Dance punch!

An alternative ending is:

16
 What pond?
 Parthasarathy pond. ⁴

¹ A vadai is a fried snack that is shaped like a tortoise shell.

² Cloth-wicks are used in the oil-lamps that are often found in Hindu temples.

³ Pun -- the Tamil word "kutthu" means "standing" and "punch."

⁴ This refers to a Chennai temple and pond dedicated to the God, Krishna.

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

1

பிஸ்கெட், பிஸ்கெட்.

bis keT biscuit bis keT biscuit
Biscuit, biscuit.

2

என்ன பிஸ்கெட் ?

en na bis keT
what biscuit
What biscuit?

ஜாம் பிஸ்கெட்.

jaam bis keT
jam biscuit
Jam biscuit.

3

என்ன ஜாம் ?

en na jaam
what jam
What jam?

டி ஜாம்.¹

Ti jaam
tea jam
Tea jam.

¹ The answers to the first two questions are given by association: biscuit is joined by jam; and jam is joined by tea.

4

என்ன டி ?

en	na	Ti
what		tea

What tea?

புன் ரொட்டி.¹

bun	roT	Ti
bun	bread	

Bun bread.

5

என்ன புன் ?

en	na	bun
what		bun

What bun?

ரிப்புன்.²

rib	bun
ribbon	

Ribbon.

6

என்ன ரிப்புன் ?

en	na	rib	bun
what		ribbon	

What ribbon?

பச்சை ரிப்புன்.

pac	chai	rib	bun
green		ribbon	

Green ribbon.

¹ Rhyme -- "tea" (in the previous line), and "rotti" a (type of flat bread).² Rhyme -- "bun" (in the previous line), and "ribbon."

7

என்ன பச்சை ?

en na pac chai
 what green
 What green?

மா பச்சை.

maa pac chai
 mango green
 Mango green.

8

என்ன மா ?¹

en na maa
 what mango / mother
 What mango / mother?

டிச்சர் மா.

Tic char maa
 teacher mother
 Teacher mother.

9

என்ன டிச்சர் ?

en na Tic char
 what teacher
 What teacher?

கணக்கு டிச்சர்.

ka Nak ku Tic char
 math teacher
 Math teacher.

¹ Pun -- "maa" means "mango" and "mother."

10

என்ன கணக்கு?

en na ka Nak ku
 what math

What math?

மாடி கணக்கு.¹

maa Di ka Nak ku
 upper-level math
 Upper-level math.

11

என்ன மாடி?

en na maa Di
 what upper-level

What upper-level?

மொட்டை மாடி.

moT Tai maa Di
 top upper-level
 Top upper-level.

¹ The literal meaning of “maaDi” is, the roof of a building.

12

என்ன மொட்டை ? ¹

en na moT Tai
 what top / shaved head

What top / shaved head?

பழனி மொட்டை. ²

pa LRZa ni moT Tai
 Palani shaved head

Palani shaved head.

13

என்ன பழனி ?

en na pa LRZa ni
 what Palani

What Palani?

வடபழனி. ³

va Da pa LRZa ni
 Vadapalani

Vadapalani.

¹ Pun -- “moTTai” means “top” and “shaved-head.”

² Palani is a town in southwest Tamil Nadu where people often shave their heads as part of the religious worship.

³ Vadapalani is a neighborhood in Chennai.

14

என்ன வடை ?

en na va Dai
what vadai

What vadai?

ஆமை வடை.¹

aa mai va Dai
tortoise vadai

Tortoise vadai.

15

என்ன ஆமை ?

en na aa mai
what tortoise

What tortoise?

குளத்து ஆமை.

ku Lat thuu aa mai
pond tortoise

Pond tortoise.

16

என்ன குளம் ?

en na ku Lam
what pond

What pond?

திரி குளம்.

thi ri ku Lam
cloth-wick pond
Cloth-wick pond.

¹ A vadai is a fried snack that is shaped like a tortoise shell.

17

என்ன திரி?

en na thi ri
what cloth-wick

What cloth-wick?

விளக்கு திரி.¹

vi Lak ku thi ri
oil-lamp cloth-wick

Oil-lamp cloth-wick.

18

என்ன விளக்கு?

en na vi Lak ku
what oil-lamp

What oil-lamp?

குத்து விளக்கு.

kut thu vi Lak ku
standing oil-lamp

Standing oil-lamp.

19

என்ன குத்து?²

en na kut thu
what standing / punch

What standing / punch?

கும்மாங் குத்து!

kum maang kut thu
dance punch

Dance punch!

¹ Cloth-wicks are used in the oil-lamps that are often found in Hindu temples.

² Pun -- "kutthu" means "standing" and "punch."

An alternative ending is:

16

என்ன குளம் ?

en na ku Lam
what pond

What pond?

பார்த்தசாரதி குளம்.¹

paart tha saa ra thi ku Lam
Parthasarathy pond

Parthasarathy pond.

c) Tamil.

1

பிஸ்கெட், பிஸ்கெட்.

2

என்ன பிஸ்கெட் ?

ஜாம் பிஸ்கெட்

3

என்ன ஜாம் ?

டி ஜாம்.²

¹ This refers to a Chennai temple and pond dedicated to the God, Krishna.

² The answers to the first two questions are given by association: biscuit is joined by jam; and jam is joined by tea.

4

என்ன டி ?
புன் ரொட்டி.¹

5

என்ன புன் ?
ரிப்புன்.²

6

என்ன ரிப்புன் ?
பச்சை ரிப்புன்.

7

என்ன பச்சை ?
மா பச்சை.

8

என்ன மா ?³
டிச்சர் மா.

9

என்ன டிச்சர் ?
கணக்கு டிச்சர்.

¹ Rhyme -- "tea" (in the previous line), and "rotti" a (type of flat bread).

² Rhyme -- "bun" (in the previous line), and "ribbon."

³ Pun -- "maa" means "mango" and "mother."

10

என்ன கணக்கு?

மாடி கணக்கு.¹

11

என்ன மாடி?

மொட்டை மாடி.

12

என்ன மொட்டை ?²பழனி மொட்டை.³

13

என்ன பழனி?

வடபழனி.⁴

14

என்ன வடை?

ஆமை வடை.⁵

¹ The literal meaning of "maaDi" is, the roof of a building.

² Pun -- "moTTai" means "top" and "shaved-head."

³ Palani is a town in southwest Tamil Nadu where people often shave their heads as part of the religious worship.

⁴ Vadapalani is a neighborhood in Chennai.

⁵ A vadai is a fried snack that is shaped like a tortoise shell.

15

என்ன ஆமை?

குளத்து ஆமை.

16

என்ன குளம்?

திரி குளம்.

17

என்ன திரி?

விளக்கு திரி.¹

18

என்ன விளக்கு?

குத்து விளக்கு.

19

என்ன குத்து?²கும்மாங் குத்து!

An alternative ending is:

16

என்ன குளம்?

பார்த்தசாரதி குளம்.¹¹ Cloth-wicks are used in the oil-lamps that are often found in Hindu temples.² Pun -- "kutthu" means "standing" and "punch."

d) Commentary on Verbal Content.

The range of topics in “What Biscuit?” is dizzying. There are often huge contrasts in scale between two things: something tiny and personal, and something large and public. To give just two examples: a snack of food (vadai), and an entire neighborhood (Vadapalani), are juxtaposed in question-and-answer no. 13; and, oil in oil-lamps, and temple ponds (also called tanks), are juxtaposed in question-and-answer no. 16. Such verbal play helps the player to become conscious of, and integrate, various levels of the human experience.

The use of English words in the first lines of “What Biscuit?” (biscuit, jam, tea, bun), culminating with the rhyme of two English words -- “bun” and “Ribbon” -- gives a sense of how many English words have been incorporated into spoken Tamil in Chennai; and of how bilingual many Tamil people in this city have become.

The introduction of new words in this question-and-answer conversation -- as in any conversation -- is justified by relevance. In this and other question-and-answer chants, it seems that a “regular” method of claiming relevance in order to introduce new material involves specifying what kind of thing something is, as in:

¹ This refers to a Chennai temple and pond dedicated to the God, Krishna.

(9) “What teacher?” “Math teacher”; and (10) “What math?” “Upper-level math.” However, in “What Biscuit?,” new material is also introduced by virtue of two words having similar or identical sounds (through a rhyme or pun); and by virtue of association (for example: biscuits, jam, and tea).

Sometimes as the words of “What Biscuit?” are spoken, players repeat three hand motions in succession: 1) hands forward (right hand facing downwards, and left hand facing upwards), and clap with one’s partner; 2) both hands forward, and clap with one’s partner; and 3) palms facing together, and clap one’s own hands.

6)

ந் தி ரு க் கு ?

en thi ruk ku

what use

What Use?



Activity 6. (Figure 19.)

a) English Translation.

Paap-paa-La.
Chuuch-chu-La.

Where are you going?
To break sticks.

What use are sticks?
To make a basket.

What use is a basket?
To put eggs in.

What use is an egg?
It becomes a chick.

What use is a chick?
It can be kept in a closed pot.

Come on, come on, rise up!

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

1

பாப்பாள.

paap paa La

சூச்சுள.

chuuch chu La

2

எங்கு போண?

eng gu poo Na
where going

Where are you going?

சுள்ளி அடிக்க.

chuL Li a Dik ka
sticks to break

To break sticks.

3

சுள்ளி எந்திருக்கு?

chuL Li en thi ruk ku
sticks what use?

What use are sticks?

கூடு கெட்ட.

kuu Du keT Ta
basket to make

To make a basket.

4

கூடு எந்திருக்கு?

kuu Du en thi ruk ku
basket what use?

What use is a basket?

முட்டை இட.

muT Ta i Da
egg to put

To put eggs in.

5

முட்டை எந்திருக்கு?

muT Ta en thi ruk ku
egg what use?

What use is an egg?

குஞ்சி பொரிச்சு.

kunj ji po rich cha
chick starting

It becomes a chick.

6

குஞ்சி எந்திருக்கு?

kunj ji en thi ruk ku
chick what use?

What use is a chick?

முட்பாணையி வச்சி.

mu Da paa nai yi vach chi
closed pot kept

It can be kept in a closed pot.

7

கொஞ்சி கொஞ்சி வளக்க.

konj ji konj ji va Lak ka
come on come on to raise up

Come on, come on, rise up!

c) Tamil.

பாப்பாள.

சூச்சள.

எங்கு போண?

சுள்ளி அடிக்க.

சுள்ளி எந்திருக்கு?

கூடு கெட்ட.

கூடு எந்திருக்கு?

முட்ட இட.

முட்ட எந்திருக்கு?

குஞ்சி பொரிச்ச.

குஞ்சி எந்திருக்கு?
 முட பானையி வச்சி.
 கொஞ்சி கொஞ்சி வளக்க.

d) English translation, with Movements.

No standard movements.

e) Genre.

Question-and-answer chain-chant.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

Among the ideas that the words of this chant might teach are: Everything has a use. Everything leads to something else. There is no end to the chain of events. Everything can be questioned -- and each answer can lead to a new question.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

This question-and-answer activity is quite similar to one that myself and friends used to play (in English) with our parents, when we were growing up in New York City. That activity could be called, “The Why? Game.” The Why? Game functioned as a mild rebellion and delaying action in relation to following any sort of instruction. It went something like this:

Parent: Please eat your vegetables.

Child: Why?

P: So you will grow up healthy and strong.

C: Why?

P: So you can have your own children one day.

C: Why?

P: So you can tell them to eat their vegetables.

C: Why? etc.

The game would typically end with the parent becoming exasperated, and telling the child to please stop asking questions and just do as requested.

7)

தாக்கா!

thaak kaa
please give
Please Give!



Activity 7. (Figure 20.)



Activity 7. (Figure 21.)



Activity 7. (Figure 22.)



Activity 7. (Figure 23.)

a) English Translation.

Older sister, will you give me your pick¹?
I won't give it. If I did, mother would hit me.

Please give it. I already asked mother.
I do not see where my pick is.

Where is the pick? (repeat)

I do not see the pick box. (repeat)

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

அக்க அக்க ஈராளி தாக்கா
ak ka ak ka ii raa Li thaak kaa
older sister older sister pick give
Older sister, please you give me your pick.

தரமாட்டேங். அம்மா அடிக்கம்.
tha ra maaT Teeng. am maa a Dik kum
won't give mother will hit
I won't give it. If I did, my mother would hit me.

தாக்கா. அம்மன்னோடி கேட்டிய.
thaak kaa am man noo Di keeT Ti ya
give mother already asked
Please give it. I already asked your mother.

ஈரளி எவட ந கண்டில.
ii raa Li e va Da na kaN Di la
pick where I do not see
I do not see where my pick is.

¹ A wooden pick used to remove lice eggs from one's scalp.

ஈரளி எவட?

ii raa Li e va Da
pick where
Where is the pick?

ஈரளி பெட்டியை காணலெ.

ii raa Li peT Ti yai kaa Na le
pick box do not see
I do not see the pick box.

c) Tamil.

அக்க அக்க ஈராளி தாக்கா?

தரமாட்டேங். அம்மா அடிச்சம்.

தாக்கா. அம்மன்னோடி கேட்டிய.

ஈரளி எவட ந கண்டில.

ஈரளி எவட?

ஈரளி பெட்டியை காணலெ.

d) English Translation, with Movements.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Movements</u>
Older sister, will you give me your pick?	<i>The players sit in a circle One player holds the iiraaLi, which is represented by a small stick. A player sitting to her left aks --</i>
I won't give it. If I did, mother would hit me.	<i>The player holding the iiraaLi replies --</i>
Please give it. I already asked mother.	<i>The player to the left again asks --</i>
I do not see where my pick is.	<i>and the iiraaLi holder replies --</i>
	<i>The player holding the iiraaLi hands it to the player who has been asking for it.</i>
	<i>Then the dialogue begins again, with the next player to the left asking the new iiraaLi-holder to give the iiraaLi.</i>
Where is the pick?	<i>Once the iiraaLi has worked its way around the circle, one player asks the player to her left --</i>
	<i>And this question is asked of the next player, and the next...around the ring.</i>
I do not see the pick box.	<i>Finally, the stick representing the iiraaLi is placed between everyone's toes, and all of the players chant --</i>
	<i>as they alternately clap their hands, and place their hands on the ground and lift themselves up and move themselves to the left.</i>

e) Genre.

This activity is a conversational dramatic ring game. Then the rotates, with players sitting, hand-clapping, and chanting.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

This activity seems to especially be about seeking to avoid sharing, as it involves players giving excuses about why they cannot give the requested item. The activity acknowledges and puts into play the desire to not share a thing, to not allow it to become public, but rather to keep a thing private, as an individual possession.

I did my best to interview the child players, and other members of the community, regarding the meaning of this activity, but people did not seem to have very much to say. Perhaps this was in part because, although in Kani culture it is a somewhat shameful thing to want to not share, this activity gives voice to selfishness, and helps players to reach a totally self-contradicting compromise regarding the matter: together the players chant that they cannot see the pick box, while they can all see it and can actually feel it (in the center of the circle, between their collective toes)! The subject of selfishness might have been

embarrassing to talk about. And in fact, a great function and value of traditional forms of play is that they can enable people to face and work through issues that they might not feel comfortable talking about in personal terms.

The activity also brings out into public a somewhat private and embarrassing tendency -- to have lice eggs in one's hair. The object that players ask for is the next player's iiraali (a wooden pick used to remove lice eggs from one's scalp). By modern hygienic standards, an additional excuse that players might give for not loaning their iiraali to the next player is sanitation -- that it would not be a good idea to share one's iiraali, because this might enable lice to spread. However, this modern sanitation idea is not raised in the play.

The activity seems to actually celebrate the mixed feelings that players may have about sharing things. The activity seems to exuberantly state: this is who we are -- conflicted beings regarding what is private and what is public.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

Korea

(Kim, 1998, p. 133)

“Hand me a fine-toothed comb”

Hand me a fine-toothed comb,
Hand me a wide comb.

The singer reported that her grandmother used to sing this song to her when she was a young girl, as she (the grandmother) would comb her hair. Combing hair -- like tending to lice eggs on a person's scalp -- can be an intimate and loving act, and the comb or pick itself can come to represent the emotions and relationships involved. Thus, asking someone to give a comb or pick, for use on the asker or the giver, can be a request that is loaded with emotions.

8)

மந்தி சாடி
 man thi chaa Di
 monkey jumping
 Monkey Jumping.



Activity 8. (Figure 24.)



Activity 8. (Figure 25.)



Activity 8. (Figure 26.)



Activity 8. (Figure 27.)



Activity 8. (Figure 28.)



Activity 8. (Figure 29.)

a) English Translation.

On this finger, a monkey having jumped, (five times.)
 Having gone around a round rock,
 The young monkey was out-of-breath.
 Is rain coming?
 We want rain!
 Going inside a cave.
 Sitting inside a cave.
 Take the bag of leaves for chewing.
 The crab is running.
 The fox is running.
 kich-chi, kich-chi, kich-chi

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

இதிலி மந்தி சாடி. (5 times)
 i thi li man thi chaa Di
 on this (finger) monkey having jumped
 On this finger, a monkey having jumped,

வட்டபாறை சிற்றி,
 vaT Ta paa Rai siT Ti
 round rock having gone around
 Having gone around a round rock,

கறங்கி குட்டி கூரங் அறுத்து.
 ka Rang gi kuT Ti kuu rang a Rut thu
 tired young monkey cut
 The young monkey was out-of-breath.

மழை வருமா?

ma LRZHai va ru maa
rain coming
Is rain coming?

மழை வருப்பு.

ma LRZai va rup pu
rain we want
We want rain!

அப்பு கடி பொவுப்பம்,

ap pu ka Di poo vup pam
cave inside going
Going inside a cave.

அப்பு கடி இருந்து.

ap pu ka Di i run_u thu
cave inside sitting
Sitting inside a cave.

வெற்ற பக்கறை எடுத்து.

veT Ti pak ka Rai e Dut thu
betel nuts bag take
Take the bag of betel nuts for chewing.

நண்டு ஊறுது,

naN Du uu Ru thu
crab running
The crab is running.

நரி ஊறுது,
 na ri uu Ru thu
 fox running
 The fox is running.

கிச்சி கிச்சி கிச்சி.
 kich chi kich chi kich chi

c) Tamil.

இதிலி மந்தி சாடி. (5 times)
 வட்டபாறை சிற்றி,
 கறங்கி குட்டி கூரங் அறுத்து.
 மழை வருமா?
 மழை வருப்பு.
 அப்பு கடி பொவுப்பம்,
 அப்பு கடி இருந்து.
 வெற்ற பக்கறை எடுத்து.
 நண்டு ஊறுது,
 நரி ஊறுது,
 கிச்சி கிச்சி கிச்சி.

d) English Translation, with Movements.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Movements</u>
	The speaker holds a listener's right hand: the speaker's left hand is around the listener's right wrist.
On this finger, a monkey having jumped, (<i>five times</i>)	The speaker's right hand pulls the fingers on the listener's right hand, one after another.
Having gone around a round rock, The young monkey was out-of-breath.	The speaker's right hand makes a circle around the palm of the listener's right hand.
Is rain coming? We want rain!	
Going inside a cave. Sitting inside a cave.	The speaker's right hand finger walks up the listener's right arm.
Take the bag of betel nuts for chewing.	The speaker's right hand finger walks down back into the listener's palm (as if the speaker's hand had forgotten to bring the bag of betel nuts), and again finger walks up the listener's arm.
The crab is running, The fox is running -- kich-chi, kich-chi, kich-chi	The speaker's right hand finger walks towards the listener's right armpit -- but the listener pulls away before his/her armpit can be tickled very much.

d) Genre.

Finger-play, with chant. A Tamil term for this genre is

கிச்சளங் களிச்சிண்து
 kic cha Lang ka Lich chi Na thu
 tickling play
 Tickle play.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

This finger-play activity culminates in the speaker moving his hand from the listener's hand (an extremity of the body), to the listener's armpit (the trunk of the body) -- although the listener playfully attempts to block this approach. This escalating emphasis on the tactile level at the end of an activity appears in at least three of the other Kani children's activities in the present collection: 1) at the end of the negotiation in "One Bucket" (Activity 3) -- when the would-be rescuers gesture so as to place betal nuts into the hostage-holders' mouths; 2) at the end of "Rolling" (Activity 9) -- when the other players gently beat the back of the person who has been bent over, and who, despite having had three chances, has not guessed the location of the stone; and 3) and at the end of "Tiger and Goat" (Activity 12) -- when the tiger pounces on the goat. In each of these cases, verbal contact is finally replaced with physical contact. This might teach that, as the English saying goes, "actions speak more loudly than words." It might also

teach that -- whether it is friendly or unfriendly --communication that begins on the oral verbal level may develop into physical contact.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

Variations of this activity are found throughout Tamil Nadu. The ending is always similar, with the fox and crab walking up the listener's arm, towards the armpit, and the speaking non-sense sounds such as "kich-chi, kich-chi, kich-chi."

However, the first part of the activity is very different in the Kani variant. The talk about the monkey, the monkey going to sit on a rock, the discussion about rain, and the implication that someone is going towards the listener's armpit to get out of the rain -- all of these motifs (in relation to this particular play activity) are unique to the Kani people, as far as I know. These motifs correspond to actual conditions and situations of everyday lives of Kani people: many of them actually do walk in the forest, and actually do often go into caves to get out of the rain.

Below are the words of the more standard version of this activity in Tamil Nadu.

This activity has four stages:

i)

The speaker, with her right hand, points to successive fingers on a listener's right hand, naming typical components of a meal, such as:

சாப்பாடு

saap paa du
rice

Rice,

சாம்பார்

saam baar
a lentil stew
Sambar,

உறுகாய்

uu Ru gaay
pickle
Pickle,

ரசம்

ra sam
soup
Soup.

ii)

The speaker places his right elbow in the palm of the listener's right hand as if to mix the food, saying,

பாப்புக்கடைமா பாப்புக்கடை ¹
 paap pu ka Dai maa paap pu ka Dai
 dhal mixing dhal mixing
 Mix the dhal, mix the dhal.

iii)

The speaker then gestures with his right hand as if to give some of the food to various people, saying

தம்பி கொன்ஜொம்
 tham bi kon jom
 younger brother little
 A little for younger brother.

தங்கச்சி கொன்ஜொம்
 thang gach chi kon jom
 younger sister little
 A little for younger sister.

அப்பா கொன்ஜொம்
 ap paa kon jom
 father little
 A little for father.

அம்மா கொன்ஜொம்
 am maa kon jom
 mother little
 A little for mother.

¹ A formal Tamil word for dhal is “பருப்பு,” “paruppu.”

தாத்தா கொன்ஜொம்
 thaat thaa kon jom
 grandfather little
 A little for grandfather.

பாட்டி கொன்ஜொம்
 paaT Ti kon jom
 grandmother little
 A little for grandmother.

உனக்கு கொன்ஜொம்
 u nak ku kon jom
 for you a little
 A little for you.

எனக்கு கொன்ஜொம்
 e nak ku kon jom
 for me a little
 A little for me.

iv)

This version of the activity ends in the same way that “Monkey Jumping” does:

The speaker, using his right hand, finger-walks up the right arm of the listener, heading for the armpit, and tickles the listener, saying

நண் டு ஊறுது,
 n̄aN Du uu Ru thu
 crab creeping
 The crab is creeping.

நரி ஊறுது,
 n̄a ri uu Ru thu
 fox creeping
 The fox is creeping.

கிச்சி கிச்சி கிச்சி.
 kich chi kich chi kich chi

Two positive instances of interpersonal interaction that this activity presents (and teaches) are: 1) the teller fingerplays on, and tickles, the listener's arm; and, 2) the teller mimes and describes giving food to each member of the family.

9)

உருண்டோ

u ruN Doo
rolling
Rolling.



Activity 9. (Figure 30.)



Activity 9. (Figure 31.)



Activity 9. (Figure 32.)



Activity 9. (Figure 33.)



Activity 9. (Figure 34.)

a) English Translation.

A wild-pig was trapped,
An old man was killed,
A drumstick¹ fell in the fire.
Who took it?
Uncle took it.
Bring your uncle's dog's head!
Rolling, rolling!

¹ A vegetable.

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

பன்னி சத்தவட,

pan ni sat tha va Da
wild-pig to trap
A wild-pig was trapped,

முப்பன கொன்னவட.

muup pa na kon na va Da
old man to kill
An old man was killed,

அடிப்பி பட்ட மிருங்ங பழம்.

a Dip pi paT Ta mi rung ga pa LRZam
in fire to fall drumstick (a vegetable) fruit
A drumstick (a vegetable) fell in the fire.

ஆரு எடுத்த?

aa ru e Dut tha
who took
Who took it?

கொமச்ச எடுத்த.

ko mach cha e Dut tha
uncle took
Uncle took it.

கொமச்ச தெல நெ கொண்டுபிய.

ko mach cha the la ne koN Du pi ya
uncle head dog bring
Bring your uncle's dog's head!

உருண்டோ, உருண்டோ.
 u ruN Doo u ruN Doo
 rolling rolling
 Rolling, rolling!

c) Tamil.

பன்னி சத்தவட,
 மூப்பன கொன்னவட.
 அடிப்பி பட்ட மிருங்ங பழம்.
 ஆரு எடுத்த?
 கொமச்ச எடுத்த.
 கொமச்ச தெல நெ காண்டுபிய.
 உருண்டோ, உருண்டோ.

d) English Translation, with Movements.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Movements</u>
<p>A wild-pig was trapped, An old man was killed, A drumstick (vegetable) fell in the fire. Who took it? Uncle took it.</p>	<p><i>The words are spoken by a player who has a small stone in his hand. This player taps the stone in a circle on the back of a player who is bent over and looking downwards. The other players stand around the player who is bent over, with the palms of their hands on his back.</i></p>
<p>Bring your uncle's dog's head!</p>	<p><i>Upon speaking these words, the player who is holding the stone places it between the hands of one of the other players.</i></p>
<p>Rolling, rolling!</p>	<p><i>All of the players who have been touching the back of the bent-over player, and the player who was tapping the stone on the bent-over player's back now rub their hands together, as they say this word over and over.</i></p> <p><i>The bent-over player straightens up and guesses which player has the stone between his/her hands.</i></p> <p><i>If the bent-over player guesses correctly, the player who has been caught with the stone must take on the bent-over player role.</i></p> <p><i>If the bent-over player guesses incorrectly, he/she has to bend-over for another round. After three incorrect guesses, the other players softly beat his/her back -- and the play ends, unless someone else volunteers to play the bent-over role.</i></p>

e) Genre.

Guessing game, played in part on the back of a bent-over participant in the center of a group.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

One thing that this activity seems to be about is: keeping secrets from an individual, and the contrasting experiences of groupness and individuality. The members of the group are literally saying and doing things behind (and above) the bent-over player's back.

The words refer to themes of loss: death and theft. These subjects perhaps correspond to the anxiety of being left out of a group, which is experienced by the bent-over player.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

This activity is similar in ways to "Hide and Seek" -- although while in that game players hide their entire bodies, in this game they just hide a stone behind parts of their bodies (between their hands).

10)

முள்ளிக்க

muL Lik ka
 a fruit (with thorns on the plant)
 A Fruit.



Activity 10. (Figure 28.)

a) English Translation.

The children's fruit is on a tray,
 The comb is beating the mirror,
 A group of crabs is on the river bank.
 Salesman -- give, give, the red and black dancing nut!
 What is your father's name?
 A drumstick¹ stem.
 Eat a drumstick stem.
 Drink water from three pieces of bamboo.
 Place some rice on a dried leaf.
 Take a lizard's egg, break it and put it.
 Call with a ko-ra-va shouting!
 Take the hand of a daughter of a woman-of-a-wandering-group.

¹ A vegetable.

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

முள்ளிக்க பிள்ளிக்க தாம்பளம்,
 muL Lik ka piL Lik ka thaam ba Lam
 fruit (with thorns on the plant) child tray
 The children's fruit is on a tray,

சீப்பு அடிக்கிற கண்ணாடி,
 siip pu a Dik ki Ra kaN Naa Di
 comb beating mirror
 The comb is beating the mirror,

நண்டு கூட்டம் கரையிலே.
 naN Du kuuT Tam ka rai yi lee
 crab group on a river bank
 A group of crabs is on the river bank.

குண்டு மணி கூத்தாட
 kuN Du ma Ni kuut thaa Da
 red and black nut dancing

தாரும், தாரும் செட்டியாரே!
 thaa rum thaa rum cheT Ti yaa ree
 give give salesman
 Salesman, give, give, the red and black dancing nuts!

தவப்பங் பெரு என்னா?
 tha vap pang pe ru en naa
 father name what
 What is your father's name?

மிருக்க தண்டு.
 mi ruk ka thaN Du
 drumstick (a vegetable) stem
 A drumstick stem.

மிருக்க தண்டு தின்னவனே.

mi ruk ka thaN Du thin na va nee
drumstick (vegetable) stem to eat
Eat a drumstick (vegetable) stem.

முன்னாளி வெள்ளம் குடிச்சு.

mun naa Li veL Lam ku Dich cha
three pieces of bamboo water drink
Drink water from three pieces of bamboo.

வரே பட்ட இல சோறு.

va ree paT Ta i la choo Ru
dried leaf rice
Place some rice on a dried leaf.

போட்டு பல்லி முட்ட ஓடச்சி விச்சி.

pooT Tu pal li muT Ta o Dach chi vich chi
take lizard egg break put
Take a lizard's egg, break it and put it.

கூப்பிடுங்கே கொரவ.

kuup pi Dung gee ko ra va
call (a type of shouting)
Call with a ko-ra-va shouting!

இடுங்கோ கொறத்தி

i Dung goo ko Rat thi
woman-of-a-wandering-group

மொவள் கையடுங்க.

mo vaL kai ya Dung ga
daughter's hand
Take the hand of a daughter of a woman-of-a-wandering-group.

c) Tamil.

முள்ளிக்க பிள்ளிக்க தாம்பளம்,
 சீப்பு அடிக்கிற கண்ணாடி,
 நண்டு கூட்டம் கரையிலே.

குண்டு மணி கூத்தாட

தாரும், தாரும் செட்டியாரே!

தவப்பங் பெரு என்னா?

மிருக்க தண்டு.

மிருக்க தண்டு தின்னவனே.

முன்னாளி வெள்ளம் குடிச்ச.

வரே பட்ட இல சோறு.

போட்டு பல்லி முட்ட ஓடச்சி விச்சி.

கூப்பிடுங்கே கொரவ.

இடுங்கோ கொறத்தி

மொவள் கையடுங்க.

d) English Translation, with Movements.

Words

The children's fruit is on a tray,
 The comb is beating the mirror,
 A group of crabs is on the river bank.
 Salesman -- give, give, the red and
 black dancing nut!
 What is your father's name?
 A drumstick (vegetable) stem.
 Eat a drumstick stem.
 Drink water from three pieces of
 bamboo.
 Place some rice on a dried leaf.
 Take a lizard's egg, break it and put it.
 Call with a ko-ra-va shouting!
 Take the hand of a daughter of a
 woman-of-a-wandering-group.

Movements

The players sit on the ground, in a circle. All the players except the speaker place their fingers, outstretched, on the ground in front of them. As the speaker says words are being spoken, one player touches the fingers of the other players.

e) Genre.

Counting game, on the ground (participants in a ring).

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

As in many children's chants, there is a bizarrely wide range of images and topics. Some of the instructions in this activity -- such as "Eat a drumstick stem. / Drink water from three pieces of bamboo. / Place some rice on a dried leaf. / Take a lizard's egg, break it and put it" -- may be imitating, even mocking, adult practices of cooking and eating; and possibly magical or ritual practices also.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

USA.

"Eeny Meeny Mine-y Moe."

Eeny meeny mine-y moe,
Catch a tiger by the toe.
If he hollars let him go,
Eeny-meeny mine-y moe.

This counting-out game also includes a series of instructions:

Philadelphia, USA

(Abrahams 1963a, p. 11.)

“Acka-backa”

Acka-backa, soda cracker.
Does your father chew tobacco?
Yes. No. Maybe so.
Yes. No. Maybe so.

A version of this counting-out game was performed by the children-of-Tamil-descent in the Oct. 2005 videoconference:

Northern Ireland

The Omagh School.

“My Mother and your Mother”

My mother and your mother
Were hanging out the clothes.
My mother hit your mother
A punch on the nose.
What colour was the blood?
[the speaker spells out a color]
And you are O U T.

The words of this counting-out game were sent to us in Chennai by students in Northern Ireland who would be participating with us in the May 2006 Megaconference Jr. videoconference (for the full page of lyrics sent to us in Chennai from the Omagh school, please see Figure 51, p. 506).

11)

கொலையா

ko lai yaa

a bunch

A Bunch.



Activity 11. (Figure 36.)



Activity 11. (Figure 37.)

a) English Translation.

A bunch, a bunch of cashew-nut fruits.
 More and more, collect and come.
 The forest is burning!
 Children, come running!

A bunch, a bunch of mangos.
 A certain type of mango.
 Where is the thief?
 Let us sit in a group,
 Sit and find out.

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

கொலையா, கொலையா முந்திரிகா.
 ko lai yaa ko lai yaa mun thi ri kaa
 bunch bunch cashew-nut fruit
 A bunch, a bunch of cashew-nut fruits.

நெறய, நெறய, சேந்து வா.
 ne Ra ya ne Ra ya cheen thu vaa
 more more collect come
 More and more, collect and come.

காட்டிலெ தீ எரியது!
 kaaT Ti le thii e ri ya thu
 forest (in) fire burning
 The forest is burning!

பிள்ளைகளே, ஓடி வா!
 piL Lai ka Lee oo Di vaa
 children run come
 Children, come running!

கொத்து கொத்து மாம்பழம்.

kot thu kot thu maam ba LRZam
bunch bunch mango fruit

A bunch, a bunch of mangos.

கொடாலி மாம்பழம்.

ko Daa li maam ba LRZam
a type of mango mango fruit

A certain type of mango.

கொள்ளை அடிப்பவன் எங்கெ?

koL Lai a Dip pa van eng ge
things person who takes where

Where is the thief?

இருப்பான் கூட்டத்திலே,

i rup paan kuuT Tat thi lee
sit

Let us sit in a group,

இருப்பான் கண்டுபிடி.

i rup paan kaN Du pi Di
sit find out

Sit and find out.

c) Tamil.

கொலையா, கொலையா முந்திரிகா.
நெறய, நெறய, சேந்து வா.

காட்டிலெ தீ எரியது!
பிள்ளைகளே, ஓடி வா!

கொத்து கொத்து மாம்பழம்.
கொடாலி மாம்பழம்.

கொள்ளை அடிப்பவன் எங்கெ?
இருப்பான் கூட்டத்திலே,

இருப்பான் கண்டுபிடி.

d) English Translation, with Movements.

Words

Movements

The players sit on the ground, in a circle. One player stands up and -- from outside the circle -- walks around the circle, with a leafy branch in his hand.

In each verbal exchange, the walking player says the first line, and the sitting players respond.

A bunch, a bunch of cashew-nut fruits.
More and more, collect and come.

The forest is burning!
Children, come running!

A bunch, a bunch of mangos.
A certain type of mango.

Where is the thief?
Let us sit in a group,
Sit and find out.

The walking player places the branch on the ground behind one of the sitting players. That sitting player jumps to his feet. These two players then race around the outside of the circle. The object is to be the first to get back to the spot vacated by the player who had been sitting -- and usually the player who had placed the branch on the ground gets there first. The player who loses this race becomes the walking player in a new cycle of the game.

e) Genre.

Movement with chant. One participant circles the ring in which others are sitting, thus this is a ring activity. This activity could also be called a game, as chasing occurs during part of it.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

Variants of this activity are popular all over Tamil Nadu. This is one Tamil children's songs/chants/dances/games that stands for, represents, all of them.

The Kani children chanted the words in call-and-response form, with the walking player calling, and the sitting players responding. The children in Philadelphia knew this game also, but they performed the words differently: they sang the words, and did so in unison (there was no call-and-response between the walker and sitters).

The words refer to events of physical danger (fire), and moral and property danger (theft). Thus, the subject matter is alarming -- appropriate to stimulate players to jump up, and run.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

USA

“Duck, Duck, Goose.”

In one variant of this game, the walking player touches the back of the “goose” (as opposed to placing a leafy branch behind the chosen sitting player, as in “A Bunch”).

USA

“Cookie Jar.”

(Wharton, 1979, p. 363.)

Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar? (<u>name</u>) stole the cookie from the cookie jar.	<i>All.</i> <i>One player.</i>
Who me? Yes you.	<i>Named player.</i> <i>All (except named player).</i>
Couldn't be. Then who?	<i>Named player.</i> <i>All (except named player).</i>
(<u>name</u>) stole the cookie from the cookie jar. Who me?	<i>Named player.</i> <i>New named player.</i>
etc.	

The players walk round in a circle, clockwise, holding hands. The game can begin with one player entering the center of the circle, and pointing to a player in the ring whom she wants to accuse of stealing the cookie from the cookie jar.

This game, like "A Bunch," involves the idea that one member of the community is a thief -- that is, is unfair, anti-social, and not playing by the rules. That person does not belong in the circle, which represents the friendly, orderly community. As the role of the thief shifts from person to person, it becomes clear that this role, condition, and personality trait, is a part of life in the community. These two games might even seem to acknowledge that this anti-social trait is a part of each individual, as well as being a part of society. The games also playfully satisfy society's need to identify and expel the bad one -- and in the process make it clear that this cleansing is not really possible, but rather is a constant process that once achieved, needs to immediately be begun again elsewhere.

12)

புலி ஆடு
pu li aa Tu
tiger and goat
Tiger and Goat.



Activity 12. (Figure 38.)



Activity 12. (Figure 39.)



Activity 12. (Figure 40.)



Activity 12. (Figure 41.)



Activity 12. (Figure 35.)

a) English Translation.

Njang-nga-li, pung-ngi-li, open the door,
The forest tiger is here.

Have you seen the young goat?
Yes.

Where?
Inside the house.

Can I come in?
You can not come.

Having smashed the earth, I will jump!
Having broken your leg, I will twist it!

I will climb upon your roof!
Having thrown a spear at you, I will cut you with it!

If he eats raw rice,
He will break his teeth.

Is the metal lock closed?
It is closed.

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

ஞங்ஙலி புங்ஙிலி கதவு தற,
njang nga li pung ngi li ka tha vu tha Ra
(evocative marker) (evocative marker) door to open
Njang-nga-li, pung-ngi-li, open the door,

நர மட் டும் வேங்கபுலி.
na ra maT Tum veng ga pu li
here forest tiger
The forest tiger is here.

ஆடு குட்டியை கண்டாளா?
aa Tu kuT Ti yai kaN Daa Laa
goat young see
Have you seen the young goat?

ஆமோ.
aa moo
yes
Yes.

எங்கே?

eng gee
where
Where?

வீட்டு குள்ளே.

viiT Tu kuL Lee
house inside
Inside the house.

வரலாமா?

va ra laa maa
Can I come in?

வரமாட்டேங்.

va ra maaT Teeng
You can not come.

மண்ணு வெட்டி சாடுவேன்,

maN Nu veT Ti chaa Du veen
earth having smashed I will jump
Having smashed the earth, I will jump!

கால வெட்டி முறிப்பேங்.

kaa la veT Ti mu Rip peen(g)
leg having broken I will twist
Having broken your leg, I will twist it!

ஓட்டு மேல ஏறுவேங்,

ooT Tu mee la e Ru veeng
roof up I will climb

I will climb upon your roof!

ஈட்டி விச்சி குத்துவேங்.

iiT Ti vich chi kut thu veeng
spear having thrown I will cut

Having thrown a spear at you, I will cut you with it.

பச்சரி திம்பங்,

pach cha ri thim bang
raw rice eat

If he eats raw rice,

பல்ல ஓடப்பங்.

pal la o Tap pang
teeth break

He will break his teeth.

இரும்ப பூட்டா?

i rum ba puuT Taa
metal lock closed

Is the metal lock closed?

பூட்டு.

puuT Tu
closed

It is closed.

c) Tamil.

ஞங்ஙலி புங்ஙிலி கதவு தற,
நர மட்டும் வேங்கபுலி.

ஆடு குட்டியை கண்டாளா?
ஆமோ.

எங்கே?
வீட்டு குள்ளே.

வரலாமா?
வரமாட்டேங்.

மண்ணு வெட்டி சாடுவேன்!
கால வெட்டி முறிப்பேங்!

ஓட்டு மேல ஏறுவேங்!
ஈட்டி விச்சி குத்துவேங்!

பச்சரி திம்பங்,
பல்ல ஓடப்பங்.

இரும்ப பூட்டா?
பூட்டு.

d) English Translation, with Movements.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Movements</u>
Njang-nga-li, pung-ngi-li, open the door, The forest tiger is here.	<p><i>The first line in each exchange is spoken by a player enacting the tiger. This player walks around the outside of the ring. The response is spoken by the players who compose the ring -- they are standing, facing the center of the ring, and holding hands.</i></p>
Have you seen the young goat? Yes.	
Where? Inside the house.	
Can I come in? You can not come.	
Having smashed the earth, I will jump! Having broken your leg, I will twist it!	
I will climb upon your roof! Having thrown a spear at you, I will cut you with it!	
If he eats raw rice, He will break his teeth.	
Is the metal lock closed? It is closed.	<p><i>The "tiger" tries to enter the ring, but the players holding hands try to prevent him from doing so. If the "tiger" does manage to go over, under, or through a hand-holding link, and enter the ring, the "goat" may escape the ring (and the ring players may then try to keep the "tiger" inside the ring, to further protect the goat.)</i></p>

e) Genre.

Ring game, with question-and-answer chant.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

One thing that this activity seems to be about is how group members can protect its most vulnerable members. The activity demonstrates how through bonding, togetherness (represented by players standing in a circle and holding hands), members of a community can protect the most vulnerable among them from dangerous outsiders.

Circles with protective powers appear in numerous Kani stories and ceremonies. When sleeping in the forest, Kani men have a manthiram that they can chant, that they feel helps to create a spiritual-powered circle around them, that wild animals cannot enter. Many children's singing-games involve circles. These activities seem to teach that a circle of people often may be expanded, but it should never be broken, violated.

In the playing of the "Tiger and Goat" game that we video recorded, it took quite a while for the tiger to break into the circle. When the tiger finally did break in,

and was about to pounce on the goat, one boy (whose hand had been jumped over by the tiger) kicked his right leg forward, in “body English” fashion, seemingly in encouragement of the tiger, to help the tiger get the goat (Figure 35). This seemed to express a forbidden emotion that may be felt by players who form the ring: on one level, the ring people want the tiger to get the goat and end the game (as people get tired and want the game to end): thus, the boy kicks, it seems, to express sympathy with tiger, and give it some extra momentum, as that tiger is about to catch the goat.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

This activity is reminiscent of the story of the Three Little Pigs. In that story, a wolf comes and seeks to enter three successive houses of pigs (he succeeds in the first two cases only). In each case, an occupant of the house say to the wolf, “You cannot come in!” The wolf then threatens, “I’ll huff, and I’ll puff, and I’ll blow your house down!” The Three Little Pigs story presents a different ideal than group bonding for protection: in the Three Little Pigs story, it is an individual’s good planning, use of strong building materials, and hard work, that prevents the dangerous outsider from breaking in and devouring one.

13)

முத்தி முத்தி
 mut thi mut thi
 frog frog
 Frog, Frog.



Activity 13. (Figure 43.)



Activity 13. (Figure 44.)



Activity 13. (Figure 45.)



Activity 13. (Figure 46.)



Activity 13. (Figure 47.)

a) English Translation.

Frog, frog, cry, cry.
Eyes open wide!

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

முத்தி முத்தி, குறங் குறங்.
 mut thi mut thi ku Rang ku Rang
 frog frog cry cry
 Frog, frog, cry, cry.

கண்ணு வெட்டி கிளி!
 kaN Nu veT Ti ki Li
 eyes having split open
 Eyes open wide!

c) Tamil.

முத்தி முத்தி, குறங் குறங்.
 கண்ணு வெட்டி கிளி!

d) English Translation, with Movements.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Movements</u>
Frog, frog, cry, cry.	<i>The players squat, placing their hands on the ground in front of them.</i>
Eyes open wide!	<i>They bounce with each word.</i>
	<i>They place their fingers in front of their eyes, as if to hold their upper and lower eyelids apart.</i>

e) Genre.

Movement with chant.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

A major element of this little play activity is bouncing up and down like a frog. The second part -- "eyes open wide!" -- could both refer to the frog's eyes opening wide, and to the child's eyes opening wide when seeing a frog jump.

To play this activity is to express exuberance. Players open up to each other: they open their eyes wide, for one thing. The activity involves enacting an animal, an element of nature, just for fun.

The second part of this activity is an exercise in finger-and-hand coordination: one must quickly place one's hands over one's eyes.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

Thailand.

(Phoasavadi and Campbell, 2003; pp. 21-3.)

“Elephant Song.”

Elephant, elephant, elephant.

Little sister/brother, have you ever seen an elephant?

Elephant is a big animal.

His nose is long, and is called a trunk.

His teeth are underneath his trunk, and are called tusks.

He has ears, eyes, and a long tail.

Here, as in “Frog, Frog,” the players enact an animal. In the case of “Frog, Frog,” the named body part is, eyes. In “Elephant Song,” numerous body parts are named and enacted. As discussed in Chapter 5, a common form of language teaching and learning is pointing to one’s body parts, and naming them. It seems that children also enjoy identifying with animals, and naming those animals’ body parts as well.

14)

உ ண் ணி உ ண் ணி

uN Ni uN Ni
 tick tick
 Tick, Tick.



Activity 14. (Figure 48.)



Activity 14. (Figure 49.)



Activity 14. (Figure 50.)

a) English Translation.

Tick, tick, come, come.
Eyes open wide!

b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

உண்ணி உண்ணி, வா வா.
 uN Ni uN Ni vaa vaa
 tick tick come come
 Tick, tick, come, come.

கண்ணு வெட்டி கிளி!
 kaN Nu veT Ti ki Li
 eyes having split open
 Eyes open wide!

c) Tamil.

உண்ணி உண்ணி, வா வா.
 கண்ணு வெட்டி கிளி!

d) English Translation, with Movements.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Movements</u>
Tick, tick, come, come.	<p><i>One player holds his hand outward, palm down. Another player places his hand above the first player's hand, with his fingers downward and together, as if to pinch the top of the first player's hand. Successive players add their hands, each one above the previous hand.</i></p> <p><i>With each word, the players bounce their hands (and arms) up and down, with each set of fingers staying in contact with the hand below.</i></p>
Eyes open wide!	<p><i>Each player places his fingers in front of his eyes, as if to hold his upper and lower eyelids apart.</i></p>

e) Genre.

Movement with chant.

f) Commentary on Performative Components and Verbal Content.

The clinging of the ticks perhaps represents how people can become attached to each other. Enacting a series of animals, one clinging to the next even as they move, may express a sense of connectedness and community.

As was mentioned in regard to the previous the activity: the second part of this activity is an exercise in finger and hand coordination, as one must quickly place one's hands over one's eyes. As players do so, they shift from collaborating in a group activity, to playing individually.

g) Similar Activity Found Elsewhere.

The hand-touching-hand-in-a-chain part of the "Tick, Tick" activity reminded me of how sometimes before the beginning of a team game in the USA, players on a team may stand in a circle with each putting a hand toward the center, one hand on top of the next; and then raise their hands as one, and shout. This routine is an expression of solidarity.

The hand-touching-hand-in-a-chain behaviour is also reminiscent of the custom of two players alternatingly putting a hand on a baseball bat, going upwards

towards the narrow end of the bat. This is an elimination game -- with the winner being the last one to be able to put his hand (or the defined number of fingers) at the top of the bat. The winner then gets the first choice of who will be on his team. Thus, even though this hand-over-hand activity is a competition, it leads to the formation of teams, and thus has to do with creating community and togetherness.