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/chant/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

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*.


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.


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 Tirunelvelli. 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 *Therukkutti*, a genre of traditional folk street theater, was still being performed in much of northern Tamil Nadu (1990). Alf Hiltebeitel 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 at 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) ஒறுகலலு Transliteration: o ru kal lu
   one stone
   One Stone.

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

2) ஓன் நாம்பாட்டி Transliteration: oN Naam paat thi
   one garden
   One Garden.

Movement with chant.
3) 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) chan tha Nam
    sandalwood ash
    Sandalwood Ash.

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

5) en na
    what
    What Kind Of?

Question-and-answer chain-chant, with illustrative gestures.
6) What use?
en thi ruk ku
What Use?

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

7) Please Give!
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) Monkey Jumping.
man thi chaa Di
monkey jumping
Monkey Jumping.

Finger-walk routine, with chant.
9) う ruN Doo
    rolling
    Rolling.

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

10) みル Lik ka
    a fruit with thorns on the plant
    A Fruit.

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

11) こ koo 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) ஆட்டு பலி
   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) உண்டி நிறி, உண்டி நிறி
   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, Kavita, 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 styles; 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) 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.
Activity 1. (Figure 8.)

Activity 1. (Figure 9.)

one stone
One Stone.
a) English Translation.

One stone, pick up,
One stone, throw.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>two</th>
<th>two thousand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>three thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>four</td>
<td>four thousand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five</td>
<td>five thousand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

One stone, pick up,

One stone, throw,

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

reN Du two
reN Daa yi ram two thousand
muu Nu three
muu Naa yi ram three thousand
nāa lu
four

nāa laa yi ram
four thousand

anj ji
five

anj jaa yi ram
five thousand

c) Tamil.

நாா் காம் நந்தாகத்திய.

நாா்காம் நந்தாகத்திய.

நாா்காம் கிளை தாகி பஞ்சகதிய.

நாா்காம் கிளை தாகி பஞ்சகதிய.

ஆல் கிளை, பால் கிளை,
அம்பா பஞ்சகதிய.

அம்பா பஞ்சகத்துக் கிளை,
அம்பா பஞ்சகதிய.

அம்பா பஞ்சகத்துக் கிளை,
அம்பா பஞ்சகதிய.
The underlined words in the above text are substituted with the following words in subsequent verses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tamil</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>விளை நடம்</td>
<td>Vili nādam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>புரதும்</td>
<td>Purattum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>தானும்</td>
<td>Thānum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>அழைக்கி</td>
<td>Azhakkī</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**d) English Translation, with Movements.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The players stand in a circle, each</td>
<td>Each player gestures with his/her right hand, as if to pick up a stone in the center of the circle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>facing the center of the circle.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One stone, pick up,</td>
<td>Each player gestures with his/her right hand, as if to throw towards the center of the circle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One stone, throw.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One thousand parrots, having jumped,</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are flying. (Repeat.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dancing parrot, singing parrot,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying to the temple,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parrot is flying to the temple,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying in the sky. (Repeat.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

飰

aa Da
to dance

pa Rak ka ve
to fly

(here “ setDefaultCloseOperation ("ve") is added as an emphatic marker),

and --

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

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.

q) 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.
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.

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:

- reN Daam two
- muu Naam three
- naa laam four
- anj jaam five
- reN DuuT Ti two hundred
- muu NuuT Ti three hundred
- naa luuT Ti four hundred
- anj juuT Ti five hundred
c) Tamil.

சேல வந்த பார்க்கிறி வீரரும் பார்க்கி, நெடுத்தும் வீரரும் செய்த பார்க்கி. பார்க்கும் நிறைவு கல்லில் மரங்களும், ஆண பார்க்கிறி அழகுகா!

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

இப்பல் வந்த பார்க்கி இப்பல் ஓடியதி

புதிய வந்த பார்க்கி புதிய ஓடியதி

நாயக வந்த பார்க்கி நாயக ஓடியதி

அழக வந்த பார்க்கி அழக ஓடியதி
d) English Translation, with Movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In one garden, a section of a garden,</td>
<td><em>The players face forward, and swing their arms forward and backward (as if to enact sowing seeds)</em>,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One hundred sprouts are growing.</td>
<td><em>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.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A seed, a bean, and young women came,</td>
<td><em>The players stand up.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having sung,</td>
<td><em>The players extend their left arms to the side.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>having danced,</td>
<td><em>The players extend their right arms to the side.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hit the parrot.</td>
<td><em>The players jump up into the air, and clap their hands above their heads.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 symmetricality.

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.)
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.

One pot of water bring

One flower bloomed

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.

இம் பிகட்டு போலம்
im bi Duk ku pa Nam
How much money

தாரங் வித்தல், மென்மை?
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?

ஒமையத் செர்த்து சுள்ளம்.
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.
இருக்கல் ஆற்றல் நோக்கி
in tha ma la an tha ma la e LRZu thi
this mountain that mountain having written

காண் விளை, மன்னர்?
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?

மிளக்கூர் தோற்ற காலம்.
vi Da maaT Teenj cha Dai yaa
I won’t give long-haired men
I won’t give, you long-haired men.

நர்பா மரு கால
oT Tu vii Du kaT Ti
thin-brick house make

காண் விளை, மன்னர்?
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?

மிளக்கூர் தோற்ற காலம்.
vi Da maaT Teenj cha Dai yaa
I won’t give long-haired men
I won’t give, you long-haired men.
If we make a palm-leaf house for you, will you release him, you fools?

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

vi Da maaT Teenj cha Dai yaa
I won’t give
long-haired men
I won’t give, you long-haired men.
If we make a two-story brick-and-cement 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.
c) Tamil.

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

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

The would-be rescuers chant the above question five times, with arms successively wider apart.
தொலை கால்
துவால் விளை, மலபார?
விளையடைக் கலந்த.

மாறு விட்ட கால்
துவால் விளை, மலபார?
விளையடைக் கலந்த.

அல்லது மாறு விட்ட கால்
துவால் விளை, மலபார?
விளையடைக் கலந்த.

நாரின் வாழ்வு?
நாலாகத்தை மேற்புற ஒன்றின் காலா.
d) English Translation, with Movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One pot of water bring, One flower grows.</td>
<td><em>Two of the taller players form an arch. The remaining players form a line.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two pots of water bring, Two flowers grow.</td>
<td><em>The line moves through the arch, alternating between weaving to the right and left.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three pots of water bring, Three flowers grow. <em>(etc.)</em></td>
<td><em>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.</em> &lt;br&gt; <em>The other members of the line gather around the two hostage-holders and their hostage, and chant:</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much money do we have to give, so that you will release him, you fools? I won’t give, you long-haired men. <em>(5 times)</em></td>
<td><em>Each successive time the would-be rescuers chant this line, they stretch their arms out wider, indicating more and more money.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If we give this mountain or that mountain in writing, will you release him, you fools? I won’t give, you long-haired men.</td>
<td><em>The would-be rescuers gesture to this side and that side as they mention the two mountains.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 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.\textsuperscript{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 betal 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.

\textsuperscript{1} England began its occupation of India in the early 1600s. The earliest printed English version of “London Bridge” seems to be in \textit{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._
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

சன் சந்த வின் சோம நன்ற் சந்த ஒளி?
chan tha Nam in num naa Raa thoo
sandalwood ash not smell
Will the sandalwood ash not have smell?

2

னா ருவகு கார் வா சு நாயா சு தூ?
naa Ru vak ku ka ru vaa Du
the smell (for) dried fish
For smell, it is dried fish.

3

ரா தங் ஓன் நம் கோத்தா தூ?
kaa ya thuk ku thaT Ta nee
dried fish not beat softly
Will the dried fish not be beaten softly?

4

சன் சந்த வின் சோம நன்ற் சந்த ஒளி?
chan tha Nam in num naa Raa thoo
sandalwood ash not smell
Will the sandalwood ash not have smell?

5

கா யா துக் கு தாத டா நீ?
kaa ya thuk ku thaT Ta nee
soft beating (for) goldsmith
For soft beating, it is the goldsmith.

6

தாதா கோத்தா டா தூ?
thaT Tang oN Num koT Taa thoo
goldsmith not beat loudly
Will the goldsmith not beat loudly?

7

கோத்தா டு வாக் கு கூ விட வು?
koT Tu vak ku koo vi lu
beating loudly (for) temple
For beating loudly, it is the temple.
4

நோக்கி கலந்த ஒற்றுமை தவற்காக செய்ய முடியாது;
ko vu lu oN Num kum bi Daa thoo
will the temple not worship?

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

5

றா ஸாங் ஒற்றுமை பெரும்பற்றி செய்ய முடியாது;
raa sang oN num pee sa thoo
will the king not speak?

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

6

பல்லி கலந்த ஒற்றுமை பதுக்காக செய்யா?”
pal li on num pa thung gaa thoo
lizard not hide
will the lizard not hide?

பதக்கில் கு கலா நீக்க.
pa thung gak ku kaL La nee
hiding (for) thief
for hiding, it is the thief.
Will the thief not run?

For running, it is water.

Will the water not hang?

For hanging, it is the coconut.

Will the coconut not guard?

For guarding, it is the bat.
10

Will the bat not catch?

For catching, it is hunting.

c) Tamil.

1

2

3

4
5

நான் சூழ்ந்து செய்ததா?
சகவதுக்குப் போனா.

6

பஞ்சில் கூறும் புத்தகத்துக்கு?
பதிக்கம் குமாரனாவரதா.

7

காணா திண்ம என்ன கற்றதா?
சிதைவுகை கிளையானா.

8

தன்னால் கூறும் இல்லாததா?
ஏக்குற்றுக்கு காண்பதா.

9

சாதார் கூறும் காணலாயா?
காண்பது அமுக்கியா.

10

பெயர் இல்லாமல் காணலாயா?
காண்பாலும் செய்யாயா.
d) English Translation, with Movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will the sandalwood ash not have smell?</td>
<td>Fingers of the right hand in a circular rubbing motion over the left palm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For smell, it is dried fish.</td>
<td>Fingers of the right hand in a circular rubbing motion over the left palm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the dried fish not be beaten softly?</td>
<td>Fingers of the right hand tap down on the left palm, softly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For beating softly, it is the goldsmith.</td>
<td>Fingers of the right hand tap down on the left palm, softly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the goldsmith not beat loudly?</td>
<td>Fingers of the right hand form a fist, and tap down on the left palm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For beating loudly, it is the temple.</td>
<td>Fingers of the right hand form a fist, and tap down on the left palm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the temple not worship?</td>
<td>Fingertips together, as if to pray.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For worshipping, it is the king.</td>
<td>Fingers of the right hand to chin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the king not speak?</td>
<td>Fingers of the right hand to chin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For speaking, it is the lizard.</td>
<td>First finger of the right hand pointing upwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Gesture Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the lizard not hide?</td>
<td>Knees bent, elbows apart, fingers of the right hand form a fist which rests in the left hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For hiding, it is the thief.</td>
<td>Knees bent, elbows apart, fingers of the right hand form a fist which rests in the left hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the thief not run?</td>
<td>Running motion (arms and feet go up and down).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For running, it is water.</td>
<td>Gesturing as if to toss forward the water from a pot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the water not hang?</td>
<td>Right hand chops down on upward facing left palm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For hanging, it is the coconut.</td>
<td>Right hand up with wrist rotating, as if holding a coconut.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the coconut not guard?</td>
<td>Right hand up, as if holding a coconut, wrist rotating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For guarding, it is the bat.</td>
<td>Arms flap, suggesting a flying motion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the bat not catch?</td>
<td>Flying motion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For catching, it is hunting.</td>
<td>Arms move as if to pull back an arrow, in a bow.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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)

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? ¹
   An unripe banana.

10
What kind of unripe / gravy / goat meat? ²
   Egg gravy.

11
What kind of egg?
   A forest-chicken egg.

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

1
அ வாமா வேறு ஃபி?  
en na veeT Te
   what   hunting
What are you hunting for?

பாண்டு விலை வேறு ஃபி.  
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
What kind of wild pig?

3
What kind of town?

4
What kind of rice?

Golden rice.
5

What kind of gold?

kaak ka pon nu
shining gold.

6

What kind of crow?

aN Dang kaak kaa
dark crow
A dark crow.

7

What kind of pot?

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

en na choo Ru
what cooked-rice
What kind of cooked-rice?

pa LRZanj choo Ru
old cooked-rice
Old cooked-rice.

9

en na pa LRZam
what fruit
What kind of fruit?

ka Ri vaa LRZap pa LRZam
unripe banana
An unripe banana.

10

en na ka Ri
what unripe / gravy / goat meat?
What kind of unripe / gravy / goat meat?

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.”
What kind of egg?

A forest-chicken egg.

c) Tamil.

1

What kind of egg?

A forest-chicken egg.

2

What kind of egg?

A forest-chicken egg.

3

What kind of egg?

A forest-chicken egg.
4

நான் கா அமிடாம் அமிடி?

பீரா கா அமிடி.

5

நான் கா பீரா காவா?  

கா கா பீரா காவா.

6

நான் கா கா கா?  

அல்லாய் கா கா கா.

7

நான் கா அல்லாம்?  

இறக்குத்து குறாம்.

8

நான் கா இரும்?

புட்டு இரும்.

1 Rhyme -- “கா கா கா” and “கா கா கா.”

2 Rhyme -- “அல்லாம்” and “அல்லாம்.”
d) English Translation, with Movements.

No standard traditional movements.

e) Genre.

Question-and-answer chain-chant.

---

1 Rhyme -- “புதும்” and “புயும்.”
2 Pun -- “கதி.”
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: “என்று வரும்” (“kaak-ka”, “shining”), becomes “என்று வரும்” ("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: “țiõñàíí” (“aNDang”, “big”), becomes “țiõñàíí” (“aNDam”, “pot”).

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

Then, a meaning-changing pun occurs in questions-and-answers numbers 9 and 10. “õñj” (“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 “țiõñ jõõíñ” (“añthaathi”), which was especially employed by the poet, Abirami Pattar (late 1700s - early 1800s). In añthaathi, 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 Paatu” (" WebDriverWait::wait_for< std::future<void> > (std::future<void> const &fut) ", “paTTukku 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,” “_colon”), and “cooked rice-pot” (“chootthaNDam,” “Colon”) 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 “Colon” (“veeTTai”); a Malayalam-ised pronunciation is “Colon” (“veeTTa”); and the Kani pronunciation is “Colon” (“veeTTe”), which is nasalized.

The same is the case for the word for “egg” (in question-and-answer no. 11): the standard Tamil is “Colon” (“muTTai”); a Malayalam-ised pronunciation is “Colon” (“muT-Ta”); and the Kani pronunciation is “Colon” (“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
“ぁり” (“ari”), which is an abbreviated version of “ぁりす” (“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!
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 little 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-chin-chin.

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.

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? I want fruit. (spoken by Younger Brother)

3 What fruit? Jack fruit. (spoken by Older Brother)
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 Pun -- “veTTi” can mean “a kind of root,” “not serious,” or “wood cutter.”
² Pun -- “maa” can mean “mango” or “mother.”
2

What do you want?
(en na veeN Dum)

I want fruit.
(pa LRZam veeN Dum)

3

What fruit?
(en na pa LRZam)

Jack fruit.
(pa laa pa LRZam)

4

What jack?
(en na pa laa)

Root jack.
(veer pa laa)

(spoken by Younger Brother)

(spoken by Older Brother)
5

en na veer
what root
What root?

viRgu veT Ti veer
(a kind of) root
Vetti root.

6

en na veT Ti
what veTTi
What vetti?

vi Ra gu veT Ti
wood cutter
A wood cutter.

7

en na vi Ra gu
what wood
What wood?

maa vi Ra gu
mango wood
Mango wood.

---

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

母！
母
Mother!

c) Tamil.

1

短面，短面，
(spoken by Older Brother)

2

短面面短面面？
短面面短面面。
(spoken by Younger Brother)

3

短面面短面面？
短面面短面面。

---

1 Pun no. 2 -- the Tamil word, “ma,” can mean “mango” or “mother.”
4

ஏன் என் பக்கா?  
செங்கப்பக்தா.

5

ஏன் என் செங்க?  
செங்க்செங்க.

6

ஏன் என் வேட்டி? ¹  
மீது வேட்டி.

7

ஏன் என் மீது?  
மா மீது.

8

ஏன் என் மா? ²  
அமா!

¹ Pun -- “வேட்டி” (“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 “ʊǂǐl Ɋq.” (“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 “Ɋɗǐ” ("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.

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.  

6
What ribbon?
Green ribbon.

7
What green?
Mango green.

8
What mango / mother?  
Teacher mother.

9
What teacher?
Math teacher.

10
What math?
Upper-level math.

11
What upper-level?
Top upper-level.

12
What top / shaved-head?  
Palani shaved-head.

13
What Palani?
Vadapalani.

---

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

பிஸ் கீழ், பிஸ் கீழ்.

biscuit biscuit

Biscuit, biscuit.

2

எந்த நா பிஸ் கீழ்?

en na bisc keT

what biscuit

What biscuit?

ஜாம் பிஸ் கீழ்.

jaam bisc keT

jam biscuit

Jam biscuit.

3

எந்த நா ஜாம் மே?

en na jaam

what jam

What jam?

தி 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

What tea?

What bun?

What 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

en na pac chai
What green?

Mango green.

8

en na maa
What mango / mother

Teacher mother.

9

en na Tic char
What teacher?

Math teacher.

---

1 Pun -- "maa" means "mango" and "mother."
10

en na ka Nak ku
what math
What math?

maalak kalamath

maalak kalamath.  

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

11

en na maa Di
what upper-level
What upper-level?

maaDi kalamath

maa Di 
upper-level
Top upper-level.

\footnote{The literal meaning of “maalak” is, the roof of a building.}
12

What top / shaved head?

Palani shaved head.

13

What Palani?

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

What vadai?

What vadai?

1 A vadai is a fried snack that is shaped like a tortoise shell.
17

What cloth-wick?

What cloth-wick?

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

18

What oil-lamp?

Standing oil-lamp.

19

What standing / punch?

Dance punch!

2 Pun -- “kutthu” means “standing” and “punch.”
An alternative ending is:

16

What pond?

1  பார்த்த கல்சரதி குளம். ¹

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

---

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

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

5

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

6

Pun -- “maa” means “mango” and “mother.”
10

"What is the maadi?"

MaaDi kaalam kaalai.¹

11

"What is the maadi?"

VeeYaaMaai kaalam maadi.

12

"What is the moTTai?"

Poomai VeeYaaMaai.²

13

"What is the palani?"

AmpooMai.³

14

"What is the palali?"

Olli Palali.⁴

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.
An alternative ending is:

16

Cæcum est sub umbilico.

1 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 “Ribbion” -- 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.
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

பாற் பாற் பளை.
paap paa La

சுச் சுள்.
chuuch chu La

2

எங்கு பூ நா?
eng gu poo Na
where going
Where are you going?

சுன் லிஆங்க் கா.
chuL Li a Dik ka
sticks to break
To break sticks.

3

சுன் லிஎன் தி ருக் கு?
chuL Li en thi ruk ku
sticks what use?
What use are sticks?

குட் கேட் தா.
kuu Du keT Ta
basket to make
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!

c) Tamil.

பாட்பாட்பா.

ஒழுங்கு செய்.

ஏற்சுத்து உண்டுவனா?

தான் இல்லை அப்பும்.

தான் இல்லை நடகில்கது?

பாட விள்ள.

பாட நடகில்கது?

தான் வேற்றாங்கிகும்.
No standard movements.

English translation, with Movements.

egenetion, with Movements.

Question-and-answer chain-chant.

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)  
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 pick? 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.

அக்கா அக்கா இரா லி தைக் கா
ak ka ak ka i raa Li thaak kaa
older sister older sister pick give

Older sister, please you give me your pick.

தரம் தெய்ந். அம்மா அடிக்கும்.
thara 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 அம் மன் நூ டி கெய் தி யா
thaak kaa am man noo Di keeT Ti ya
give mother already asked
Please give it. I already asked your mother.

இரா லி எ வா ஏ நா கான் டி லா
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.
Where is the pick?

I do not see the pick box.

c) Tamil.

அஞ்சக் அஞ்சக் கார்ளியி காக் கா?

நாை பாலை அை அைகைம.

காக் கா. அமைப்பு மூட்டை இறைப.

நாளை ஒயை கலை பை.

நாளை வுலை?

நாளை பையுதல் காத்திலை.
d) English Translation, with Movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Older sister, will you give me your pick?</td>
<td>The players sit in a circle One player holds the iiraaLi, which is represented by a small stick. A player sitting to her left asks --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I won’t give it. If I did, mother would hit me.</td>
<td>The player holding the iiraaLi replies --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please give it. I already asked mother.</td>
<td>The player to the left again asks --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not see where my pick is.</td>
<td>and the iiraaLi holder replies --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The player holding the iiraaLi hands it to the player who has been asking for it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Then the dialogue begins again, with the next player to the left asking the new iiraaLi-holder to give the iiraaLi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is the pick?</td>
<td>Once the iiraaLi has worked its way around the circle, one player asks the player to her left --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>And this question is asked of the next player, and the next...around the ring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finally, the stick representing the iiraaLi is placed between everyone’s toes, and all of the players chant --</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as they alternately clap their hands, and place their hands on the ground and lift themselves up and move themselves to the left.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
embarassing 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 embarassing tendency -- to have lice eggs in one’s hair. The object that players ask for is the next player’s iraaLi (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 iraaLi to the next player is sanitation -- that it would not be a good idea to share one’s iraaLi, 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 sing 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.
Activity 8. (Figure 24.)

Activity 8. (Figure 25.)

monkey jumping

Monkey Jumping.
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.

இதிகி மஞ்சி காட்டிக் கேட்டிக். (5 times)
i thi li man thi chaad Di
on this (finger) monkey having jumped
On this finger, a monkey having jumped,

வாட்டை செய்த்திக்கி, vaT Ta pa d Rai siT Ti
round rock having gone around
Having gone around a round rock,

கண்டவிகி குட்டி குடும் ஆத்திக். ka Rang gi kuT Ti kuu rang a Rut thu
tired young monkey cut
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 betal nuts for chewing.

The crab is running.
The fox is running.

kich chi kich chi kich chi.

(5 times)

(5 times)
d) English Translation, with Movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On this finger, a monkey having jumped, (five times)</td>
<td>The speaker holds a listener’s right hand: the speaker’s left hand is around the listener’s right wrist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having gone around a round rock, The young monkey was out-of-breath.</td>
<td>The speaker’s right hand pulls the fingers on the listener’s right hand, one after another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is rain coming? We want rain!</td>
<td>The speaker’s right hand makes a circle around the palm of the listener’s right hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going inside a cave. Sitting inside a cave.</td>
<td>The speaker’s right hand finger walks up the listener’s right arm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take the bag of betal nuts for chewing.</td>
<td>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 betal nuts), and again finger walks up the listener’s arm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The crab is running, The fox is running -- kich-chi, kich-chi</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
d) Genre.

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

कीच े ला ला त क ली फ कीला तु
kic cha Lang ka Lich chi Na thu
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:

\begin{verbatim}

saap paa du
rice
Rice,

saam baar
a lentil stew
Sambar,

uu Ru gaay
pickle
Pickle,

ra sam
soup
Soup.
\end{verbatim}

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

A little for younger brother.

A little for younger sister.

A little for father.

A little for mother.

1 A formal Tamil word for dhal is “paññi,” “paruppu.”
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
The crab is creeping.

The fox is creeping.

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.
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 drumstick\(^1\) 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.

\[\text{பான் வித்துதுது,}
\]
\[\text{pan ni sat tha va Da}
\]
\[\text{wild-pig to trap}
\]
A wild-pig was trapped,

\[\text{முட்டை கையாற்றுது.}
\]
\[\text{muup pa na kon na va Da}
\]
\[\text{old man to kill}
\]
An old man was killed,

\[\text{அப்பதில் பல் நிற்கும் புறை.}
\]
\[\text{a Dip pi paT Ta mi rung ga pa LRZam}
\]
\[\text{in fire to fall drumstick (a vegetable) fruit}
\]
A drumstick (a vegetable) fell in the fire.

\[\text{ஆரு ஏற்றது?}
\]
\[\text{aa ru e Dut tha}
\]
\[\text{who took}
\]
Who took it?

\[\text{உண்மையே உதிதுது.}
\]
\[\text{ko mach cha e Dut tha}
\]
\[\text{uncle took}
\]
Uncle took it.

\[\text{உண்மையே உதியும் பெற உண்மையே உள்ளே என்று.}
\]
\[\text{ko mach cha the la ne koN Du pi ya}
\]
\[\text{uncle head dog bring}
\]
Bring your uncle's dog's head!
Rolling, rolling!
c) Tamil.

பல்லிசுற்றுவல, 
ஆட்டாண் விளை வாழால.
அவ்விட நீதூக்கம் புச்சம.
அது ஆசிரியர்? 
விளைந்து செறிக்க.
விளைந்து கெனா நீதியால் விலிப.
ஒருள்லா எல்ப, ஒருல்லா எல்ப.
d) English Translation, with Movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A wild-pig was trapped,</td>
<td>The words are spoken by a player who has a small stone in his hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An old man was killed,</td>
<td>This player taps the stone in a circle on the back of a player who is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A drumstick (vegetable) fell in the fire.</td>
<td>bent over and looking downwards. The other players stand around the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who took it?</td>
<td>player who is bent over, with the palms of their hands on his back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle took it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring your uncle’s dog’s head!</td>
<td>Upon speaking these words, the player who is holding the stone places it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>between the hands of one of the other players.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolling, rolling!</td>
<td>All of the players who have been touching the back of the bent-over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>player, and the player who was tapping the stone on the bent-over player’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>back now rub their hands together, as they say this word over and over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The bent-over player straightens up and guesses which player has the stone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>between his/her hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the bent-over player guesses correctly, the player who has been</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>caught with the stone must take on the bent-over player role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If the bent-over player guesses incorrectly, he/she has to bend-over for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>another round. After three incorrect guesses, the other players softly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>beat his/her back -- and the play ends, unless someone else volunteers to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>play the bent-over role.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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).
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 drumstick\textsuperscript{1} 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.

\textsuperscript{1} A vegetable.
b) Tamil; Transliteration; Word-for-word Translation; and Colloquial Translation.

muL Lik ka piL Lik ka tham ba Lam
fruit (with thorns on the plant) child tray
The children’s fruit is on a tray,

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

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

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

thaarum thaarum cheT ti yaa ree
give give salesman
Salesman, give, give, the red and black dancing nuts!

tha vap pang pe ru en naa
father name what
What is your father’s name?

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

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

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

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.

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

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

mo vaL kai ya Dung ga
daughter’s hand
Take the hand of a daughter of a woman-of-a-wandering-group.
c) Tamil.

பண்பாட்டு நீக்க பெண் நீக்க தாம்பரம், 
நூற்றாண்டுக்கிற கல்வி வாரம், 
கேலிய கல்லு கருதப்படும். 
கேலிய முனி குற்றா

அஜிதும், அரவிந்த வெள்ளாடை!
சமையல் பெரு வல்ல வாதா?
பீட்டர் குரல் தந்தை. 
பீட்டர் குரல் தந்தை கிளை வருவலை.
பட்டி தந்தை பயன் வாய் குற்றி. 
அன்பு பண்டை உள்ள வீர். 
சமையல் பல்லி உரு பிள்ளை கிளை. 
சாம்பழிக்க விளங்குவ. 
இரண்டு கிளங்குகிற 
புனியா காலத்துக்கு.
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).
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.

கைலாசம், கைலாசம் காத்திரிக. (kaalaiya, kaalaiya kaathirik)
ko lai yaa ko lai yaa mun thi ri kaa bunch bunch cashew-nut fruit
A bunch, a bunch of cashew-nut fruits.

பெரும், பெரும், சென்று வா. (pearum, pearum, chennu vaa)
ne Ra ya ne Ra ya cheen thu vaa more more collect come
More and more, collect and come.

கால் தோல் தி அகன்று! (kaal tolkul thani uriyathu)
kaaT Ti le thi e ri ya thu forest (in) fire burning
The forest is burning!

பிளங்கு கால் கோட்டா, குழ் வா! (plangku kaal kottan, kuzhan vaa)
pil Lai ka Lee oo Di vaa children run come
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.
c) Tamil.

இந்த வாக்கு, இந்த வாக்கு நாற்டியிய நிகழ்வு, நீர்த்தண்டு, உண்டு ஐரா.

காண்தை ஐ அறியுங்க!

பின்னண்டு ஐகளை, தீர் ஐரா!

இந்து இந்து மாற்றும்.

இந்த கருத்து மாற்றும்.

இந்த கருத்து அருப்பன் காணிக்கை?

இந்த கருத்து கூட்டிகை,

இந்த கருத்து கூட்டிகை.
d) English Translation, with Movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>In each verbal exchange, the walking player says the first line, and the sitting players respond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A bunch, a bunch of cashew-nut fruits. More and more, collect and come.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The forest is burning! Children, come running!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A bunch, a bunch of mangos. A certain type of mango.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where is the thief? Let us sit in a group, Sit and find out.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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?  
(name) stole the cookie from the cookie jar.  
All.  
One player.

Who me?  
Yes you.  
Named player.  
All (except named player).

Couldn't be.  
Then who?  
Named player.  
All (except named player).

(name) stole the cookie from the cookie jar.  
Who me?  
Named player.  
New named player.

eetc.

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.
Activity 12. (Figure 38.)

Activity 12. (Figure 39.)
Activity 12. (Figure 40.)

Activity 12. (Figure 41.)
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.

नजङ न्गा ली पुंग न्गी ली का था वु था रा (evocative marker) (evocative marker) दरवाजा खोलने  
Njang-nga-li, pung-nga-li, ka-tha-va, tha-Ra  
doors to open

ना रा मत तु में गा यु ली हीरे  
na-ra maT tu me veng ga pu li  
the door, here

दीर फॉरेस्ट टाइगर है।  
The forest tiger is here.

है तु कुत टी याइ लान दा लाइ  
aa tu kuT ti yai kaN Daa Laa  
Have you seen the young goat?

यी  
yes

Yes.
Where?

d分析师?

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!
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.
c) Tamil.

சாத்து பாதித்து தக்கு குமுரம், 
தர பட்டம் கொல்லும்.

ஒரு தரம் கல்லாலா? 
ஆலி.

ஒரு தேக? 
மல்லி தான் வேட.

பாரம்பர? 
நாயா சேட.

மல்லை தீ வைத்தேன்! 
கல வைய்வு பிடியேன்!

ஙமல் புரட்டாமா! 
எள் விள்ளி குறிரொட்டாமா!

பக்கி கிளிப்பா, 
பல குள்ளபா.

இங்கும் போட்டா? 
பண்.
d) English Translation, with Movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Njang-nga-li, pung-ngi-li, open the door, The forest tiger is here.</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you seen the young goat? Yes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where? Inside the house.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can I come in? You can not come.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Having smashed the earth, I will jump! Having broken your leg, I will twist it!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will climb upon your roof! Having thrown a spear at you, I will cut you with it!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If he eats raw rice, He will break his teeth.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the metal lock closed? It is closed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.)
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.
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.

पुत्तिः पुत्तिः कुर्जु कुर्जु.

Frog, frog, cry, cry.

कनु नु वे ति की ली!

Eyes open wide!

c) Tamil.

पुत्तिः पुत्तिः कुर्जु कुर्जु.

कनु नु वे ति की ली!

d) English Translation, with Movements.

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

இல்லாமல் இல்லாமல் வா வா.

Tick, tick, come, come.

 глаз துவங்கி பின்னர் கிடி!

Eyes open wide!

c) Tamil.

இல்லாமல் இல்லாமல் வா வா.

Eyes open wide!
d) English Translation, with Movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Movements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tick, tick, come, come.</td>
<td>With each word, the players bounce their hands (and arms) up and down,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with each set of fingers staying in contact with the hand below.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyes open wide!</td>
<td>Each player places his fingers in front of his eyes, as if to hold his</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>upper and lower eyelids apart.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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.