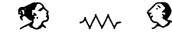


WIENER SPRACHGESELLSCHAFT



Die Wiener Sprachgesellschaft

lädt ein zu einem Vortrag

von

**Prof. Dr. Heather NEWELL**

Département de linguistique

Université du Québec à Montréal

**Tamil pronominal allomorphy is  
neither allomorphy nor problematic**

(Abstract umseitig)

Zeit: Dienstag, 16. März 2021, 18 Uhr 30

Ort: Moodle-Raum der Wiener Sprachgesellschaft

<https://moodle.univie.ac.at/course/view.php?id=188526>

S. Prochazka m. p.

M. Pöchtrager m. p.

Tamil pronominal allomorphy is neither allomorphy nor problematic  
Heather Newell, UQAM

The Tamil data in (1) has been proposed to be the best evidence morphologists have for non-local allomorphy; allomorphy conditioned across an overt intervener; the intervener here being the plural morpheme, the allomorphic forms are indicated in blue and purple, and their forms are proposed to be triggered by the Case suffixes, in black. The analysis of (1) in Smith et al. (2019) necessitates a serious complication of the theory of allomorphy to account for this non-local conditioning of the form of the base. This complication is proposed here to be an error.

(1)	a.	Nominative:	(i)	1sg.	[nã:n-Ø]	(ii)	1pl.	[na:ŋ-ka]-Ø]	
	b.	Accusative:	(i)	1sg.	[en:-ai]	(ii)	1pl.	[eŋ-ka]-ai]	(and other Cases)
(2)	a.	Nominative:	(i)	2sg.	[ni:-Ø]	(ii)	2pl.	[ni:ŋka]-Ø]	
	b.	Accusative:	(i)	2sg.	[un:-ai]	(ii)	2pl.	[uŋ-ka]-ai]	(and other Cases)

To account for the Tamil pronominal paradigm we need to examine the phonology and the morphosyntactic structure of both the Tamil pronominal and verbal systems. Importantly, paying close attention to the phonology of Tamil solves the significant problem in the morpho-syntactic literature alluded to above. (Data are from Annamalai & Steever 1998; Schiffman 1999; Subrahmanyam 1967/1968).

To account for the variations in the Tamil pronominal paradigm we need to note/propose two things. (A) Final sonorant consonants are floating (as in French liaison). They will only be pronounced as onsets to following vowels. E.g. *naal* ‘day’: [naalʌ] or [naa]. Final nasals will nasalize a preceding vowel if not pronounced as an onset. E.g. *maram* ‘tree’: [marõ]. (B) Tamil has a phonological reflex triggered by word minimality. If a word is mono-syllabic a CV/σ may be inserted (note that the epenthetic vowel ‘saves’ the final C in *naal* but not in longer words like *maram*). Floating segments and the insertion of a CV for sub-minimal words will be crucial to the analysis of (1) presented here. The variation in the forms of the pronominal roots in (1) are argued here to not be due to allomorphy, but to the regular phonology of the language.