CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 TAMIL

The word Tamil has the following meanings according to Tamil Lexicon (Vol. 111 page 1756): (1) sweetness/ melodiousness, (2) refined quality, (3) Iyartamil, Icattamil and Natakattamil, (4) Tamil Literature/ Tamil Works, (5) the Tamils and (6) the Tamil Country.

The earliest occurrence of the word 'Tamil' is found in Tolkāppiyam, the first Tamil grammatical work available to us.

The name 'Tamil' is explained in many different ways, depending on whether the person giving the explanation is a linguist, or Tamil aspirant, etc. The people who thought great of their language came to the conclusion that the sweet, melodious and beautiful nature of the language gave it this name.
Tamil language is one of the principal Dravidian languages, spoken in South India, and perhaps the only example of an ancient classical tongue which has survived as a spoken language for more than 2500 years with its basic structure almost unchanged. The Tamil Language is proclaimed to be a language with many unique characteristics. It is also interesting to note that a comprehensive Tamil grammar was already written as early as 3rd B.C. The earliest extant Tamil grammar is Tolkāppiyam.

Today Tamil is known to the linguists all over the world, and it has found a prominent place among international languages. Records show that Tamil is being taught in the United States, Germany, Russia, England, Senegal, France, Poland and, especially, in the South East Asian countries.

All these facts indicate that the Tamil language was already a well developed language before 3rd B.C. and has been successfully serving all this while without undergoing major changes.
1.2 WHAT IS GRAMMAR?

Grammar is the science of language from the point of view of pronunciation, inflection, syntax and historic development. Besides studying the grammatical aspects of the language, old Tamil grammar deals with poetics and prosody as well. In other words, Tamil grammar can be defined as one which deals with grammatical rules, description and theories of language and literature.

The word used to denote grammar in Tamil is 'Ilakkanam'.

The grammatical heritage of Tamil comes down from very ancient times. The state of a language in a particular period, and the ideas regarding the literature of a particular age are potrayed in the grammatical works of each period. So, these works are useful not only in their prescriptive aspect but also in understanding the growth, i.e. changes, additions, deletions, etc. that have occurred in the language and literature with the passage of time.
Grammar is not generated as soon as a language is formed. A spoken language gradually grows into a literary language and flourishes into a classical language, with consistency in basic forms like sounds (phones); words (morphs), etc. At this stage, rules regarding phonology, morphology, syntax etc., are identified and formulated, and a grammar is formed. Hence, only a long heritage of literature, folk and written, can give rise to a more or less consistent grammatical structure.

It is evident that Tamil would have seen golden times before its grammar was written or codified. Before coming to Tamil grammar, it will be useful to see what is meant by grammar in English. The term "grammar" comes from the Greek term 'grammatike' according to Robert A. Hall (1969:124). This etymology gives the view that the grammar of a language is found only in the written language. The spoken languages, have no grammar if not at least fluctuate so much that they are only partly grammatical (Palmer 1971:11).
Modern linguists define the term 'grammar' as involving simply a series of statements or formulae describing the underlying structure of the language as it is actually used rather than stating that it ought to be used in a particular way. For modern linguists, a grammar is far more than a mere set of rules; it is the statement, in as much detail as possible, of an extensive network of relationships among habits of linguistic behaviour, including their meanings (Hall 1969:125).

The Dictionary of Linguistics defines the term 'grammar' as a "science of the structure of a language and the rules and principles of its generally accepted use." (Pai and Gayner 1970:85).

Hockett (1958:129) says: 'The grammar or the grammatical system, of a language is (1) the morphemes used in the language, and (2) the arrangements in which these morphemes occur relative to each other in utterances'.

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Gleason (1966: 57-58) also has the same view about grammar. Accordingly, Hockett and Gleason say that, ‘grammar’ covers the two main branches of descriptive linguistics namely, morphology and syntax.

The transformationalists use the term ‘grammar’ in a different sense. In generative terms, a grammar or description of a language consists of three principal components: phonology, syntax and semantics. (Arlotto 1972:213). The term ‘grammar’ is used to include in addition to syntax, both phonology and semantic.

Emman Bach (1964:13) defines the grammar of a language as a theory or set of statements which tells us in a formal and explicit way which strings of the basic elements of the language are permitted.

Grammar has many aspects and it is approachable from varied angles. In general, we have Historical Grammar, Descriptive Grammar, Comparative
Grammar, Constructive Grammar, Prescriptive Grammar and Traditional Grammar.

1.3 TAMIL GRAMMAR

The Tamils had a clear and exhaustive concept of grammar before the Christian era itself. Tamil scholars generally accept that Tolkappiyam was written in 3rd Century B.C.

The concept of grammar was developed by the famous author Tolkāppiyar before the Christian era, somewhere around 2500 years ago. Tolkāppiyar, the author of Tolkāppiyam, the earliest extant grammar in Tamil, uses the term ‘ilakānām’ to denote grammar.

Tolkāppiyam, the earliest extant work in Tamil speaks about three aspects of grammar, namely eluttu, col and porul. The grammar was written on the basis of the literary and grammatical works that were
available in the period of Tolkāppiyar; the language that was in practical use also was taken into consideration.

The following are divisions of Tamil Grammar: Eluttu (Phonology), Col (morphology), Porul (literary conventions), Yappu (prosody) and Ani (rhetorics).

Phonology deals with the number of phonemes, their classifications, phonetics, written forms and occurrence in words; morpho-phonemic rules are generally discussed as a part of Phonology. Morphology deals with words, their classifications and inflections; syntactical aspects of compound treats general division of words, classification, inflection, derivation of syntactical aspects of compound and sentences are also discussed under morphology, which is generally termed as 'Colliyal' (study of words) or collatikaaram (chapter on words).
This section on Porul deals with literary conventions; one chapter in this section speaks about Tamil Prosody, i.e. the laws of versification and the different kinds of poetic composition. One more chapter in the same section deals with Tamil rhetorics.

Tamil language has undergone a considerable amount of changes, with the passage of time, from the period of Tolkāppiyam (3rd B.C.) till now.

The grammarian, who sincerely followed Tolkāppiyanār was sage Pavananti. Pavananti authored Nannūl. In this book, which came after almost twelve centuries since the advent of Tolkappiyam, Pavananti has retained the rules of Tolkāppiyam wherever possible and introduced modifications like additions, omissions and adoptions wherever necessary. The author of Nannūl was fully aware that a language undergoes changes with the passage of time:

"Palayana Kalitalum putiyana pukutalam
Valuvala Kaala Vakaiyi nane"  
Nan: 462
(Old concepts vanish and new concepts
emerge with the passage of time; it is neither a mistake nor
shortcoming).

Nevertheless it is interesting to note that, later works of grammar did not
deviate much from Tolkāppiyar, including Pavananti. In other words,
Tamil has not gone through major changes over the period in its
grammar.

Of all the grammars which emerged after Tolkāppiyar, NāṇṆūl is
considered to be the most popular and authoritative grammar in Tamil.

NāṇṆūl consists of two major divisions, namely, Ėlutatikaaram which deals
with Phonology and Collatikaaram which deals with words, compounds
and sentences.
The present study concentrates on the second part of Nannul, i.e. Collatikaaram, a section dealing with words, compounds, sentences, etc.

For various reasons, Pavananti has included a Chapter on words under phonology; Pata-v-iyal deals with the morphological analysis of words. The morpho-phonemic rules that appear during word formation are discussed in three chapters that follow pataviyal. It is due this reason that pataviyal is included in phonology. Hence, Pataviyal and the three chapters on morphophonemic rules have also been taken into account for the present study.
1.4 Morphology

Morphology is the study of morphemes and their arrangements in forming words. Syntax is the study of combination of words into phrases and sentences. According to Bloomfield, morphology includes the construction of words and parts of words, while syntax includes the construction of phrases.

H.A. Gleason states that some use the term morphology to cover both sub-divisions, i.e. in which case it is equivalent to grammar.

The linguists Bloch and Trager state that morphology deals with the structure of words. In the words of C.F. Hockett, morphology includes the stock of morphemes, and the ways in which the words are built out of them.

1. Bloomfield, L., p.207
2. Gleason H.A: An Introduction to descriptive Linguistics p.57
3. Bloch, Bernard and Trager, George. L. .p.53
4. Hockett, C.F: A course in Modern Linguistics. p.177
Morphology is the study of morphemes and their arrangements in forming words. Morphemes are the minimal meaningful units which may constitute words or parts of words.

Lyons, opines that, etymologically speaking, 'morphology' is simply the study of forms.

From all the above interpretation on morphology, we can realise that the term, morphology, does not exactly correspond to the terms colliyal/collatikāram used by our traditional grammarians, Tolkāppiyar and Nānulār.

The modern linguists have a very clear distinction between lexeme and morpheme.

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5. Nida : 1946: 1  
According to Aronoff (1994), lexeme is a true linguistic sign where it is defined exclusively and explicitly as any and all noun, verb and adjective stems. The effects of lexical and inflectional derivation on the lexeme do not affect its status as a sign at all. These processes, it follows, must involve elements other than linguistic signs.

Beard (1988, 1995) argues that grammatical morphemes differ from lexemes in the following ways:

(a) lexemes do not allow zero or empty forms; morphemes do.

(b) lexemes have extra-grammatical referents; morphemes have grammatical functions.

(c) lexemes may undergo lexical derivation; morphemes may not.

(d) lexemes are not paradigmatic; morphemes are.

Lexeme-Morpheme Based Morphology (LMBM) Albany, Ny: Suny Press, (1995) is a document found in the internet which argues well for its rigorous distinction of lexemes and (grammatical) morphemes.
Accordingly, grammatical morphemes are the output of purely phonological operations independent of the semantic (grammatical) operations they mark. (realize).

According to the study termed as 'separation hypothesis', bound morphemes include affixes and other modifications of the phonological representation of a lexeme, such as reduplication and (semitic) revowelling, the spelling out of articles, auxiliaries, and positions, i.e., any expression associated with a grammatical category or relation rather than a semantic one. Bound morphemes are phonological modifications (only) of the phonological representations of lexemes which mark the fact that the lexeme has undergone lexical or inflectional derivation (the Empty Morpheme Entailment). Neither type (bound or free) of morpheme has any meaning and thus morphemes attribute no meaning to the stems to which they attach. All meaning is accounted for by the derivation rules. This also explains that empty morphemes represent affixation without derivation; zero morphemes are derivations without affixation.
However, free morphemes may require syntactic positions since they are ostensibly subject to movement and also often belong to paradigms. Aronoff (1994) suggests that free morphemes will consist free adpositions, auxiliaries, conjunctions and pronouns. All but conjunctions are themselves subject to inflection. Pronouns like which and who, as well as free auxiliaries seem to move from one syntactic position to another in some languages. However, even the positions of auxiliaries and pronouns usually conform to Anderson’s general theory of affixation, which LMBM also assumes. (Beard 1995).

Having had a glance at the modern linguists’ thought on morphology and morphemes, it’s easy to say that the Tamil grammar which was written by Sage Pavananti, had some ideas of bound morphemes and free morphemes, which he has explained in Pataviyal. He had no idea at all about zero morphemes. But Agesthialingom in his book, has stated

7. Nan. 133
instances where zero morphemes do exist in Tamil but the ancient grammarians such as Nāṇṉūḷār did not mention anywhere.

It is true to say that the theoretical perceptions by Nāṇṉūḷār had not been codified systematically and explicitly. The explication of the functioning of the linguistic system has been by and large confined to the performance of the native speaker.

Vital issues of theoretical relevance have been left to one’s intuition and surmise. Intuition and surmise no doubt play a role in the linguistic description.
1.5 Syntax

Nannūlār has dealt with two branches of grammar i.e. phonology and morphology. But one might question that since Tolkāppiyar has dealt with morphology and syntax under Collatikāram, didn’t Nannūlār follow suit?

Nannūlār’s Collatikāram has five Chapters in it i.e. Noun, verb, potuvial, non-root forms and word roots modifying a noun or a verb (uricol).

It is quite clear to see that Nannūlār has talked much about syntax under potuvial especially in sūtras from 361-419.

What is a morpheme then? David crystal opines that a morpheme is a formal or a physical unit and it has phonetic shape. Secondly, it has a meaning. Thirdly, it has a syntactic role to play in the construction of larger grammatical units.
1.6 PURPOSE OF STUDY

It should be explained why, Collatikaaram, the second part of Nannūl, is taken for the present research.

The first section in Nannūl, i.e. phonology, has been analysed by Vijayavēnugōpāl from India under the title 'Modern Evaluation of Nannūl' – Eluttatikaram (phonology). Since there is already research done on this section, the researcher thought that it will be useful to evaluate the second part of Nannūl. Furthermore, in Collatikaaram, Pavananti has given precise rules, which still seem to be applicable for current times.

Tamil grammar by Pavananti is taught extensively in institutions of higher learning. Many commentaries have been written for Nannūl. Many more articles continue to appear about Nannul particularly Collatikaaram.

Nevertheless, certain rules found in Nannūl, Collatikaaram seem to have lost their current relevance while no rules are available for certain aspects of modern Tamil. This situation is quite natural as we know language undergoes changes.
Furthermore, new words have come in use. New things and concepts are introduced at a fast phase. To cater for such demands, the Tamil language has to undergo the required development and modernization. The author of Nannūl was well aware of this nature of a language and the due requirement. Nannūl states that rules and statements will have to be moderated according to the changes and requirements of time. Pavanānti supports this, thus pointing out that moderation is not new to Tamil. In fact this is a general characteristic of all languages in the world.

Pavanānti himself, had been a model for moderation. What Tolkāppiyar had said about eluttu and col at length is given in short and precise description, intact without losing their meaning and essence. It has been an ancient tradition that poems and prosody were treated as integral parts of grammar. The reason was that in those days, poetics and prosody were the vehicles for language. The letters and words exist really for the
sense and style of language and therefore a proper grammar becomes comprehensive only when it contains prescriptions for them (G. Sundaramoorthy, Early Literary Theories in Tamil, Pg. 1-20).

In Nānūl only two aspects of Tamil language i.e. eluttu and col are explained, whereas Tolkāppiyam deals with eluttu, col and porul. This tendency of convergence towards grammar by Nānūlar is in accordance with modern linguistics. i.e. Literature and grammar are two totally different aspects. The traditional grammar’s main aim is to explain the literature of the particular language. But now, grammar or linguistics has more vital functions, i.e to understand the subtle characteristics of a particular language.

In the history of language it may be noticed that the grammatical categories of a language increase or decrease in number with the passage of time. That is to say, new categories may emerge and old categories may become obsolete.
As we have seen in ancient grammars, Tolkappiyam and Nānṉūl, rules and statements are made by the authors to cater for the demand during their contemporary periods. Also, we see that rules and statements found in Tolkappiyam, have been changed or modified in later grammars. Hence, there are two schools of thoughts in Tamil grammar, i.e. Tolkappiyar's and Nānṉūlār's. The above discussion shows that change of time causes change of perception towards language.

In order to prove that such changes are necessary, we shall look at one aspect of the grammatical categories in Tamil Language. The grammatical categories are also referred to as parts of speech, i.e. word-class. According to the traditional grammarians such as Tolkappiyar and Nānṉūlār the grammatical categories are divided into four. They are (1) noun, (2) verb, (3) itaical and (4) uricol. This classification of words is rather inadequate for modern Tamil, because it has developed new categories such as adjectives, adverbs, postpositions, etc. It is true that
all these categories may be traced to the four categories from the historical point of view. However, a descriptive grammar must account for all these classes of words without involving the history.

It is this sort of observation which prompted the writer to study and conduct research on the traditional grammar (i.e. Nānūl) to ascertain whether the grammar which was founded in the beginning of the fourteenth century can satisfy the needs of the language today.

There was a need for Nānūlār to come up with his book, Nānūl, in the thirteenth century because it was felt that Tolkāppiyam was found to be resourceful but difficult to comprehend by many. Not everybody could read the grammar which was in pure verse form. Many commentators emerged to explain the verses of Tolkāppiyam. So, many interpretations about Tolkāppiyam were produced. However interpretations differed from one another on many instances. Furthermore, those interpretations could only cater for learned people.
This resulted in a new school of thought by Nāṇṉūlār. Though he did not
differ much in contents yet he made a great impact during that period
because his book contained rules in simplified form. He also introduced
terminologies to aid comprehension. The same aspirations are found
among the Tamil linguists today, that is to come up with a new grammar
to meet the demands of the present developments.

In this context, the writer’s study is geared towards understanding the
book Nāṇṉūl especially the aspect of morphology (i.e. Collatikaaram) and
relate the relevance of the contents of Nāṇṉūl to modern Tamil. Does
modern Tamil follow the rules and statements found in Nāṇṉūl? Or has it
deviated much? If it has changed, where are the changes and what are
the changes? If the changes do not comply with Nāṇṉūl rules, are there
any suggestions to include new rules? These are some of the questions
posed. The writer has attempted to answer these questions by referring
to the book Nāṇṉūl, as it is. There are many interpretations for Nāṇṉūl.
For the writer's study, the writer has referred to the commentaries by Mayilaināthar, the first person to comment on Nānṉūl; the commentary by Cāṅkara Namachivāyar, the commentary byĀrumuga Nāvalar; the commentary by Civanyānaswāmikal and last but not least, the commentary of Rāmanuja Kavirāyar.

Besides these commentators, the writer also has referred to some scholars on grammar and modern linguists. Some were critical and some were supportive towards traditional grammarians. However, none commented that the traditional grammarians were totally irrelevant in their work. Many thought that a moderation must take place in the old grammar to suit the present demands.

With these backgrounds, the writer's purpose is to study the traditional grammar i.e. Nānṉūl, to find out about Sage Pavaṉanti's concepts on grammar. To be precise, the writer's study focuses on how well Pavaṉanti has presented his concepts without much deviation from his master,
Tolkāppiyar and highlights the necessary changes made by Pavananti to suit his time. Hence, comes the writer’s job i.e. to relate the changes made by Pavananti during his time to our modern Tamil thus identifying the new aspects in Modern Tamil, for which rules ought to be constructed and Nannul rules which are still applicable, either fully or partially.

1.7 SOURCE OF STUDY

Due to the nature of the study, the main source is the second part of Nāṇṇūl i.e. Collatikaaram. Considerable reference was made to relevant articles by modern linguists to understand the grammatical theories and the theory of grammar used by the author of Nāṇṇūl. They are Agesthialingom, T.P.Meenaksisundram, Pon.Kothandaraman, S.V Manickam, S.V.Shanmugam, Thilagawathy.K, Rengan, Israel.M, Vēluppillai.R and others.

Since the writer’s study highlights about modern Tamil, a distinction has been made between Classical Tamil and Modern Tamil. To be precise,
literary works before 19th century are to be referred as classical. The
invention of papers brought a great change in printing technology. This
enhanced the growth of languages, including Tamil, to grow at a rapid
pace; Tamil was written in prose instead of verse form at this period
which is referred to as the beginning of the era of Modern Tamil.

1.8 NANNUL AND ITS CLASSIFICATIONS

Nannul is the most preferred grammar book after Tolkāppiyam. As the
name suggests, Nannul is Nanmai + Nul which means a good book.

Nannul deals with two branches in grammar. i.e. eluttu (phonemes) and
col (morphemes).

The first branch, eluttu, consists of 257 nūrpās. However, the first 55
nūrpās discuss mainly about the history of the book, the author, the
school of thought, and some basic characteristics of students.
Starting from nūrpa 56, Naṇṇūl begins to talk about the letters in detail (elluttu).

The second section consists of 204 nūrpaś. These nūrpaś mainly discuss about words.

Each section listed above has five chapters respectively. Eluttu deals with phonemes, some morphemes (pataviyal) and morphophenemic rules. Col deals with nouns, verbs, non-root forms and uricol (root of words). A detailed analysis is provided by the writer in the following chapter i.e. chapter three.

Many of the descriptions found in the work are quite revealing and interesting from the modern linguistic point of view especially the chapter on 'Pataviyal'.
Next to Tolkëppiyar, the author, Pavañanti, is considered the best
descriptive linguist of ancient Tamil country. Though Nannûl is 700 years
old, it's rules and statements are still being used. This treatise still has it's
deep impact on contemporary Tamil.

Scholars of today do not agree totally with all the essence of Nannûl. They
say that Nannûl has its shortcomings in a number of places. This defect
can only be overcome by relevant research by modern linguists.

It has been the writer's aim to highlight these shortcomings in Nannûl, as
pointed out by scholars of the present time. But it is not, in any way, to
underestimate the greatness of the scholarship of the ancient revered
author. It is believed that this approach will help a person to study
grammar with an open mind and also help in understanding the
significance of the grammatical work.
1.9 AUTHOR OF NANNṆṴL AND ITS AGE

NannṆṴl was written by sage Pavananti during the late 12th century or in the beginning of the 13th century. Sage Pavananti lived in a place called Canagai or Canatapuram. This place was ruled by a king called Ceeyagangan. Sāmināthathēśigar, a later grammarian than Sage Pavananti, has written a verse about NannṆṴl and its author. He asserts that Pavananti's time should have been A.D. 1212.

1.10 MODERN TAMIL (1900-till now)

During the struggle for freedom and independence, the role of Tamil and other Indian languages became vital for the native leaders. There was a need to effectively use the language as a powerful tool in public meetings and in newspapers to mobilize the people for the struggle for freedom. When the whole nation (India) was struggling to become free from foreign rule, a similar movement started its work in respect of the language especially in Tamil Nadu. As a result of such a movement, Tamil scholars
rose against Sanskrit domination and worked towards a pure-Tamil movement.

The present day Tamil language is free from other linguistic domination.

In the modern period a number of technical terms have been coined in Tamil. A number of volumes of books in science and technology have appeared as text-books in Tamil for the use of the students at college and university level.

Reference works such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, glossaries and handbooks have appeared at various levels. Research in various aspects of language is progressing steadfastly. Teaching materials applying new techniques are being developed to meet the current needs.

The Modern Tamil has developed into a full fledged system of aspects and modals. Various casal functions are accurately performed by several postpositions. According to the social needs, the language has developed
new grammatical categories such as adjectives, adverbs, forms with conjunctural functions, aspects, modals and certain new sentential elements. To be precise, the Tamil language is at present successfully undergoing the process of expansion, simplification, enrichment and refinement.

The commentators of various literary and grammatical works had already paved the way to the rich growth of prose works of this time. Due to the introduction of printing technology and transport facilities, newspapers, magazines and books have begun to flourish. The political and social conditions were fast changing in that period. The prose form was found more suitable for political and religious propaganda. The common people found prose form more comfortable than poems. Due to the introduction of western education in the nineteenth century, a number of text-books to cater for the needs of students at universities and colleges were published. Along with the prose works, poems also began to appear.
The Modern Tamil is making use of both modern standard written variety and the spoken varieties. The spoken varieties are found only in the short stories, novels and dramas. Travelogues, biographies, autobiographies, scholarly essays and traditional poems are written only in the standard written variety. The Modern Tamil is experiencing the influx of various new forms and hence new techniques are required to meet these new challenges, especially in the cyber era, where computers have made inroad into almost everything in our life. This era demands directly or indirectly script reform in Modern Tamil. It must be reminded that the graphemes used in the period of Tolkappiyam are not identical with the graphemes we use now. Like the other systems such as phonology and grammar, the graphemic system also has undergone changes.

It must be mentioned here that scholars such as T.P. Meenakshi Sundaranar, Pulavar Kulantai and Socio-political leaders (India) such as E.V. Ramasamy have seriously thought about graphemic system and have contributed significantly. E.V.Ramasamy (Periyar), has already eliminated
the allographic alternants and has systematized the graphemic forms in all the inconsistent rows of syllabic consonants. This change in Tamil graphemes made its way into Malaysia in 1994, when a circular from the Ministry of Education Malaysia, stated and granted recognition for these new graphemes.

Due to the advancement in Science and Technology the Tamil linguists feel that there is a need for new symbols to represent new sounds. In accordance, the introduction of more graphemic symbols in the Tamil scripts may be welcomed to ease the process of translation. We still face problem in writing names from other religions, e.g., Francis, Quotes, Xavier, Zenieth, etc. Names or words used in Information technology have sounds/letters not found in Tamil, e.g., Hard Disk, Software, Mouse, etc. Serious efforts and thoughts could yield in producing new graphemic symbols to address this problem.
The modern era of Tamil language begins with the introduction of printing machines in the 19th century. The Europeans came to propagate Christianity in Asian Countries. They felt that it was better to spread their religious beliefs through the native language. This trend became an added asset to Tamil language. We still have christian literature in Tamil. This is due to the contribution of people/authors like Caldwell who was known as the 'Father of Dravidian Linguistics'. Besides this, Beskey, C.T.E. Rhenius, enriched Modern Tamil in the 19th century. This group of scholars also includes Graul Karl, G.U. Pope and A.H. Arden who had carried out considerable research and largely contributed towards the introduction of new terminologies in prose, new grammatical categories, and new sentence structures.

8. C.T.E Rhenius: A Grammar of the Tamil Language, 1834
   Graul Karl: Outline of Tamil Grammar, 1855
   A.H. Arden: A progressive Grammar of Common Tamil 1891
New words were coined, and auxiliary verbs came into use, especially in radios and newspapers. Through this form of mass media, Tamil language has developed into a Standard dialect which embraces almost all the characteristics of sub dialects. (branch of Tamil languages).

In Modern Tamil the use of auxiliary verbs is increasing and ought to increase. As languages grow they require auxiliary verbs to give greater precision. Tamil might vie with English in this respect if its auxiliaries were fully brought into use.

Meanwhile, the twentieth century has seen some very enthusiastic geniuses who have been doing their researches prudently. Vaityapuri Pillai, T.P. Meenatchisundram, S. Aghethialingom, S.V. Shanmugam, Pon. Kothandaraman, M. Shanmuga Pillai, K. Paramasivam, Andronov and Kamil Zvelebil to mention a few.

10. Saktivel S: History of Tamil Language. p.224
The Centre of Advanced Study in linguists in Annamalai University has produced many scholars who have done constructive work. More than 500 research papers were written in Annamalai University on Tamil language alone. Under this group, Tamil language has attained its peak stage and is still growing like a burning fire.

1.11 The Commentators and their Commentaries

The language today is not as it was centuries ago. The style, and semantics differ much in many languages. Some languages have vanished in the midst of transformational era.

As for Tamil language, not much changes have occurred in its structure, though the style of writing has changed.
While sage Pavananti wrote his book, every content had to be in its verse form. It was a trend and belief that many things can be conveyed through versification. It cuts time and space. This versification has its shortcomings too. Many do not understand (the present readers) the virtual and actual connotations of the verse contents. It was for this primary purpose that sage Pavananti wrote Nānṉūl.

Nevertheless, Nānṉūl is not far from shortcomings; Nānṉūl needs the aid of Tamil pundits to explain the contents explicitly, thus instituting some good commentators to write commentaries. In fact, Nānṉūl, is the only ancient grammar treatise which continues to attract commentaries till today. This does not mean that Nānṉūl is full of absurdities. However due to its simplicity and elegant compartmentalisation, many are able to understand Nānṉūl and appreciate the noble ideas. Hence, they think that Nānṉūl ought to be highlighted and be given due credit for its noble nature.
These commentaries brought NāṇṆūḷ its superior status i.e. It is used widely in Higher Institutions of learning in Tamil Nadu, South India and places around the world where Tamil is taught.

We see attempts made by Ilampūranar, Ceṇāvaraiyar, Naccinārkinyar, Theyvaccilaiyar and Kallatar who wrote commentaries on Tolkāppiyam, have proved the salient nature of Tolkāppiyam to the Tamil world in general and to Tamil grammar in particular. The next group, so called, made numerous attempts to write commentaries on NāṇṆūḷ. They were Mayilaināthar, Ċañkaranamacīvāyar, Civanyānaswāmikal. This group gave tremendous contribution by interpreting as close as Sage NāṇṆūḷar would have thought. Besides, these commentators referred to many other grammatical and literary treatises before expressing their views. The following remarks show the great regard which these writers have for NāṇṆūḷ. This is evident from their citations and references.
1. "Munnu loliya-p-pinnul palavinul Nannular tamakku ennularuminaiy0 vennum tunivem ennuka". (Besides Tolkappiyam, Nannul is considered the best book)

2. Kaiyariya makkatkanri niliyarrum arivinaiyutaiya makkatku-p-palkall- k-kuricil pavananti ennum pulavar perumane Pukal poda vilanki nirlalan".

(Nannular is a good writer)

It is evident from the above sources, Nannul is original in its grammatical principles which make it an authoritative grammar of Tamil Language. Nannul owes its greatness to its ancestors and to its subsequent generation of grammarians.

11. Cuvaminata Tecikar : Ilakkana Kottu
12. Cankaranamaccvayer : Commentary as Nan.82
Here we will look at one of the commentaries on Nannūl, Mayilaināṭhar's commentary, the earliest among the commentaries now available to us. During the time of Mayilaināṭhar, Tolkāppiyar's rules and statements were established and have become the authority and were probably eclipsing the other views. Therefore, to those followers of Tolkāppiyam some of the statements in Nannūl must have appeared unauthoritative from this point of view.

In many instances, Mayilaināṭhar points out that Tolkāppiyam is less accurate and he asserts that Tolkāppiyam needs some adjustments for a subsequent age because new words which do not follow Tolkāppiyar's rules are coming into the language. At such moments, Nannūl replaces Tolkāppiyam and assumes the responsibility.

Mayilaināṭhar brings out the importance of certain sutras in Nannūl which are otherwise not clear. He also lays down certain rules of interpretation.
which lead to a better understanding of the sūtras without leading to any contradictions.

The originality and validity of Mayilaināthar’s views are obvious as seen from the fact that he wrote the commentary on Nannūl in Pavanathī’s time. But the other commentaries on Nannūl only came after two or three centuries.

Mayilaināthar had attempted to write commentaries on Nannūl as precise and short whenever the sūtras are clear but took a special effort to write very explicit commentaries on sūtras which he perceived as difficult to comprehend by others. Often his style or technique includes the form of questioning in a poetic manner, analysing the issues individually and answering as a whole.

13

13. Nannul Mulamum Mayilainathar Uraiyum p.20
The next valuable commentary is by Cāṅkara Namacivāyār, who came after Mayilaināthar. He has read well both Tolkāppiyam and Nāṉ�​​ṟul. In a number of instances, Cāṅkara Namacivāyār establishes that NāṉṾṾ and Tolkāppiyam had same rules and statements but he had pointed out that in many sūtras NāṉṾṾ had rules and statements which were similar to those of Tolkāppiyam, and also had many sūtras that deviated from Tolkāppiyam. (Sūtras no: 9, 233, 270, 300 where NāṉṾṾār agreed totally). The deviation takes place in sūtras number: (94, 124, 128, 284).

Rāmanuja Kaviṟāyar, who has written for the people of nineteenth century, supports the importance of NāṉṾṾ even today. This explains that whatever view which the later grammarians would like to suggest, one must refer to the commentary on Tolkāppiyam and NāṉṾṾ first. Rāmanuja Kaviṟāyar did not add anything to Civanyāsuvāmikai, but followed Cāṅkaranamacivāyār.
Rāmanuja’s major contributions were on morphology. He elucidates the syntactic structure of many Sūtras.

Ārumuga Nāvalar who comes from Ceylon, (1822-1879) had written a commentary on Nāṉṉūl. He made some changes to Čivanyānasuvāmikā’s work. He has attempted to give some new views, which scholars of today greatly appreciate.