CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Grammatical theory of Pavananti and the structure of Nannul

2.1 The Purpose of language and related concepts

Mankind express their feelings through sounds. Their thoughts and feelings are conveyed to others by means of structured and conditioned sounds which will have forms if they are written.

So, a language is born when it is expressed through sound and writing. The other party will understand it and react accordingly. A mutual cohesive bond is created through language. This uniqueness is prominently prevalent in human beings. This structured form of a language is what we call grammar.

Time constantly changes our environment, whereby new technologies emerge and the old thoughts fade away or are renewed. Mankind is
always aware of new developments and arrests new opportunities from
time to time prudently.

In fact, all the languages spoken or written undergo immense changes.
The English Language has seen remarkable changes over the years. The
grammatical concepts before the nineteenth century and those of
contemporary times differ significantly.

In the Tamil Language, grammatical concepts have been put to test for
many years. The irony is that the records clearly show proof of the glory
of the Tamil language earlier than two thousand years ago. Even today
Tamil Language survives as one of the oldest languages in the world. The
grammatical concepts have not changed drastically.

What are those grammatical concepts? How do we define a grammatical
concept? S.V. Shanmugam divides the grammatical concepts into three
fold. They are (1) the theory of grammar (2) grammatical theory and (3) methods of description.

When we realize the necessity of grammar, we have to achieve its objectives. The procedures and processes have to be considered carefully to ascertain that they will definitely help to achieve the objectives. This process is termed the theory of grammar.

To explain the grammar of a language, it is proper to identify its grammatical categories. A linguist will be able to arrange the grammatical categories in an effective manner and explain them comprehensively. Further, he must be able to define a language’s structure where all the categories are compartmentalised. This process is called grammatical theory.

Lastly, by the ‘method of description’, S. V. Shanmugam attempts to say that an author (grammariian) would have to use some approaches and
structures in his book. With this the author feels that the readers will understand the contents systematically and in an efficient manner. The author will draw out a general framework, identifying the main divisions/topics, lay them out as chapters and present each of those chapters in a most appropriate and effective manner. All these describe the 'method of description'.

The first concept, i.e., the theory of grammar, has been dealt with in Chapter One. In this chapter, the remaining concepts are to be dealt with, focusing on how Nannular attempts to clarify the need for a simple grammar; furthermore his concepts and the structure of Nāṇūḷ are also discussed.

Nāṇūḷār mainly differs from Tolkāppiyar from the pedagogical point of view. Nāṇūḷār seems to emphasise on compartmentalisation which would provide a systematic approach. There are many Śūtras through which he has given a simple, systematic approach to Tamil grammar.
Nannūḷār's famous śūtra, i.e. 462, lauds the acceptance of new developments in the Tamil Language as an enrichment process and the exclusion of any grammatical rules which become obsolete with the passage of time. From śūtra 462, it is evident that Nannūḷār has been very courageous and had a vision for the future.

Modern linguists state that Tolkāppiyar's work is found to be suitable for the well-educated, i.e., Scholars. Knowing this, Nannūḷār attempted to simplify Tamil grammar. There were many grammarians who had written many books after Tolkāppiyar, but the only book which gained immense praise and publicity was Nannūḷ. The name itself indicates the goodness of the book, i.e. nanmai + nūl > nannūḷ.

1. Nan. 462
2.2 Nannūlār’s pedagogical concepts.

In attempting to provide a good grammar, although Nannūlār accepted most of Tolkāppiyar’s thoughts, he used his own theories and method for presenting the facts. When he realised that some of Tolkāppiyar’s grammatical rules were very sound, he did not feel hesitant to include them, without any change, in his book.  

Some of Nannūlār’s Sūtras share Tolkāppiyar’s thoughts, and there are many instances where Nannūlār differs totally with some of the rules, and therefore has either modified the existing rules or introduced new rules.

When we analyse his earlier Sūtras, we notice that Nannūlār has emphasised techniques of presentation, particularly those of grammar. He asserts that grammar, is not only for scholars, but for all language lovers. He began asking questions like Socrates. Who should benefit?

2. Nan. 90, 252, 317, 396, 404, 408, 409
Who should teach? How to teach grammar? These were the questions in his mind. His sutra no. 26 explains the qualities of a good teacher, while Sutra no. 37 enumerates the qualities of a good learner (student). He believes in the pedagogy whereby students should be equipped with good potential and be ready to receive education from teachers. He proclaims that teachers must be endowed with very favourable qualities.

He attributes a very high status to teachers. A good teacher should possess qualities like being knowledgeable and very articulate and have very good interpersonal skills and be a respected person. Anyone who lacks the above qualities will not shine in his work as a teacher.

Having laid down the qualities of a good teacher, Nanñūlār stresses that students should have appropriate qualities too. He goes on to list the bad qualities which usually plaque students. According to him, laziness and

3. Nan. 26
poor discipline are rampant among students. Based on these qualities, he
categorises the students into three groups. The ‘first group’ of students
consists of those who respect their teachers greatly and grasp the facts
delivered by their teachers very efficiently. The ‘middle group’ of students
respect their teachers but are weak in retaining the education received
every day. The ‘last group’ of students lack all the qualities possessed by
the other two groups.

Nannūlar’s pedagogical thoughts run deep in areas such as teaching
techniques.

A language teacher should have the capability and proficiency to put
varying ideas into his own words, which will portray the quality of
anything said, seen or heard. Nannular insists that such a command of a
language is very essential for language teachers.
He adds that a language teacher should be able to summarise without losing the essence of the contents. Accordingly, most of the contents found in Tolkappiyar's work has been reproduced briefly and precisely by Nannular.

He also states how a book should be written. He gives ten beautiful points which will make a book complete. He argues that a good book will contain the goals of a teacher. Such a book acts as a mediator between a good teacher and students.

Qualities which make a really good book are compactness, being easily comprehensible, enjoyable, perfectly chosen words, good rhythm, rich contents, systematic arrangement, scholarliness, agreeability and a friendly touch.

4. Nan. 18
After having enumerated the qualities of students, teachers and books, Nannular goes on to talk about some techniques for effective teaching in śūtras 14 and 15. Seeing that the techniques of teaching in Nannular's work date from the 13th century, it will not be an exaggeration if it is said that he has initiated these various techniques in the field of teaching. His teaching techniques have been incorporated in the teaching in Tamilnadu.

He proposes about thirty two techniques. They are stated very briefly but could extend to many pages if explained in detail. Therefore let us see a few of them.

When he proclaims, 'This is what I'll say as my first technique', he clarifies the tactics a pedagogue will use without diverting from his teaching objectives.

His second technique is that the information should be imparted in accordance with the state of mind of the learner. Even today we
emphasize that teaching should be geared to the state of the mind of the learner.

Avoiding too much of repetition, and ways and means of problem solving and decision making are some of Nannular's other pedagogical concerns.

Among these, which one does he quote as the best technique? Any subject matter laid down in a grammar book must be consistent with general usage and should also be acceptable as a scientific or literary treatise. This is a principle significantly employed by Nannular.

By stating that a matter or a view expressed should be in accordance with that of learned people, he emphasises acceptance as a necessity for grammatical work.

During teaching, he says, the teachers' points and opinions should create an emotional conception in the learners' minds. He stresses this point
with a few similes, such as, flow of the river, the lion’s sight, the leap of a frog, the eagle’s sight and so forth. When a lion is eyeing for his prey, most likely he is not swayed by other movements. The leap of a frog is a continuous jump without any disturbances. The eagle aims sharply and catches his prey without much difficulty. These are some of the similes aptly chosen by Nunnlar to describe the qualities of a teacher.

The above similes are not mere figures of speech. The continuous flow of the water in the river, which attains its objectives finally, is also to be achieved in teaching, i.e. putting forward your points and subject matters in a continuous flow for learners to grasp without distraction.

Likewise, tracking the deer with total concentration and finally preying on it is another simile. It means a lesson should be taught according to the mental and physical aptitudes of the learner in order to achieve the objectives of the lessons.
A frog, when it leaps, leaps without any vigourous movements but casually and gracefully. The same goes for teaching when stating ones opinion, it should be said clearly and distinctly and smoothly, which would be accepted without any reservations (there would not be any arguments). Teachers should express their opinions smoothly and capture the minds of the learners.

The qualities of clarity and briefness which are greatly emphasised by Nānṉūl, are incorporated into the syllabus in Tamil Nādu at all levels from lower secondary to masters programmes and according to Sōma Ilavarsu, Nānṉūl is considered as an important subject. These show the recognition given to Nānṉūl.

Arumuga Naṉvalar's Kāndigai explanations' for the Nānṉūl which has been reprinted since its first publication over more than one hundred times, is itself a great recognition given to Nānṉūl, states Sōma Ilavarsu.
2.3 Grammatical Concepts

The Tamil Language would have come across many grammar treatises but Tolkāppiyar is considered as the earliest. It is written in a descriptive manner which suits the time of its origin. Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Literary conventions, Prosody and Rhetoric which form the chapters in Tolkappiyam, indicate the grammatical aspects of the 2000 years old Tamil Language. The various grammar books which have been published after Tolkappiyam suggest that some of the grammatical aspects found in Tholkāppiyam are obsolete now.

On realising that Tolkāppiyar’s grammar was not fully applicable to later times, Nāṟṟūṟ has produced Nāṟṟul, with clarity and precision but not deviating from the basic tenets. Linguists have agreed that no grammar book has given the impact that has been created by Nāṟṟul. Therefore sage Pavananti’s book, Nāṟṟul, is considered as the best of its kind, after Tolkāppiyam.
Forty four linguists or grammarians have interpreted "Nāṇṉūl", and therefore Sōma Ilavarasu confirms that "Nāṇṉūl" is considered as the most interpreted book in the history of the Tamil Language.

Next, let us view the grammatical concepts of "Nāṇṉūl". The various grammatical concepts found in "Nāṇṉūl" are, word classes, Classifications of Nouns, cases, verbs, finite verbs, verbal participle, relative participle and verbal roots.

Linguists feel that "Nāṇṉūḷar", has given a central emphasis to morphology and has considered it to be that which inter relates the alphabet and the word. Sākara Nāmacivāyar considers these to be effects of the impact from Sanskrit Language.

"Nāṇṉūḷar" has explained morphology stage by stage, viz. grapheme, morpheme and word. He has divided word as divisible and indivisible form.
A word, which gives a meaning, and also gives room for being divided into meaningful compartment is known as divisible word; while one which cannot be divided or separated is an indivisible word which would become meaningless if divided. Divisible words are those with lexical and grammatical meanings whereas, indivisible words usually behave as roots.

Anmai, penmai, conmai are words and when we delete the endings ‘mai’, will be called as col, which still carry meanings as nouns. But not all the ‘mai’ ending words will behave like the former. Words which are found in Nannul e.g. cemmai, cirmai, ceymai ,do not behave like the above said words. If we delete ‘mai’ endings, these words do not function as nouns. Nannulâr has accepted them as adjectival nouns.

According to S.Innâsi, “cemmai,cirmai,ceymai” can be classified as “panpill pakâa” words. These words are not further segmentable. Even if you delete ‘mai’ endings, these words will still follow the rules of Sandhi. Having realised the importance of quality(panpu), Nannulâr had made an
effort to explain the ‘panpu words’ and their sandhi rules in Śūtra 136. In semantic sense, these are ‘paṇpil paka’ and Nāṇūlār classifies them as ‘nilaipatam’, according to some commentators (Śūtra 135). S. Innāsī says that what Nāṇūlār classifies as ‘nilaipatam’ can be equalled as an indivisible word.

David Crystal says that a morpheme has its formal or physical unit; it has a phonetic shape. Secondly, it has a meaning (grammatical or semantical); thirdly it has a syntactic role to play in the construction of larger grammatical units.

C.F. Hockett further adds that morphemes are the smallest meaningful elements in the utterance of a language.

5. Linguistics p.194
In this context, ‘nilaipatam’ means that a unit which cannot be separated and if you do so, it loses its grammatical and semantical meaning.

It can be pointed that, ‘itaicol’ and ‘uricol’ are not separate entities. It is therefore preferable to classify ‘itaicol’ and ‘uricol’ as bound morphemes, according to modern linguistics. Accordingly, forms which never occur alone as whole utterances (in some normal situation) are bound morphemes.

S.V. Shanmugam laments that what Nannular considered for segmentable purposes are only finite verbs. He did not consider nouns which can be segmented. Pon. Kothandaraman and K. Paramasivam suggest that the areas which Nannular did not consider, are understood to be considered by later grammarians. It may not be wise to expect Nannular to explain every part in detail thus not leaving room for further interpretation.
Even, S. V. Shanmugam agrees that only Nāṇṇūlār has bravely come out to suggest that all Tamil words can be segmented according to six categories, i.e. pakuti, vikuti, itainilai, cāriyai, sandhi and vikaaram.

2.4 Word Classes

In Sūtra 640, Tolkāppiyar has stated clearly that all the words have meanings. May be a particular word may not be in use today, but it would have been those days. Tolkāppiyar in Sūtra 877, further argues that the element of time is capable of changing the meaning of a word.

John Lyons, 6 says that a word may be defined as the union of a particular meaning with a particular complex of sounds capable of a particular grammatical employment.

M. Vendryes, 7 says that a word is the result of the association of a given

6. Introduction to Theoretical linguistics p.200
7. Language p. 89
meaning with a given combination of sounds, capable of a given grammatical use.

Bloomfield reiterates that a 'word' is the smallest form which has a meaning.

Israel asserts that nouns and verbs do convey enough message as a sentence. Having understood what words are, we shall proceed further to find ways to classify the so called words.

Word of a language may be tested from many angles. All the stems of words, prefixes and suffixes need to be analysed. The second angle is to look at it from the point of view of 'acai'. Thirdly, vulnerability of a language plays its part. The last one is to see whether the particular language is in a prose form or a poetic form.

8. Language p. 178
Though the above categorisation succinctly studies the natural way a language is generally used, all the four angles cannot be applied together at a time, because such an analysis will lead to confusion. Hence Pon. Kothandaraman advises that analysis of a language under various aspects needs some basic norms.  

Now we direct ourselves into analysing Nannūlar’s norms in Tamil. What was in Nannūlar’s mind when dealing with parts of speech?

Firstly, Nannūlar categorises Tamil into its four components i.e. nouns (peyar), verbs (vinai), itaicol and uricol. The existence of nouns and verbs as word classes is of course not disputed in Tamil. Though, Tholkāpiyar and Nannūlar make a distinction between the former two (nouns, verbs) and the latter two (ita and uri) in Colatikaaram, the term ‘col’ is employed to refer to all the four groups.

9. Tamil Ilakkana Kotpatu p.20
In addition, Tamil words can also be classified as iyarrcol, tiricol, ticaicol and vatacol. This classification suggests that Tamil Language has a long and rich history. ‘Iyarrcol’ are words which are in existence from time memorial. While ‘Tiricol’ are words which are normally understood by the Tamil learned only. ‘Vatacol’ are words which come from sanskrit whereas words which come from other languages of the world are called ‘Ticaicol’.

English grammarians opine that words are categorised based on semantics (Gleason, 1966). In contrast, in a word ‘red tie’, ‘red’ is not a noun but an adjective. Here, we face a confusion. Can a word be an adjective? Gleason further adds that, grammarians took two stands to categorise words. One, its pure meaning and the other is its functional role.

Ku. Paramasivam views that a grammatical column was used as a base to categorise nouns and verbs. Tamil words which do not contain time
element and accept case endings come under one column (nouns), while words which do not take case endings but do show time element come under another column (vīnai). This would have been the stand by both Tholkāppiyar and Nāṇṉūlār, asserts Ku. Paramasivam.

But, itaicol and uricol do not occupy any specific grammatical column. Both, itaicol and uricol, cling to nouns and verbs to give a meaning.

From the above argument, it is clear that words can be classified into many bases. There are differing criteria, underlying all these various categories. Let us take an American criterion for classifying words.

Accordingly, to categorise words, their semantics should never be considered. One can identify a word in its morphological and syntactical context and will agree that nouns and verbs are clearly identified by using this criterion. Using the syntactic context to define a noun or a verb, is effective in identifying finite verbs occurring as nouns (usually identified
as participal nouns) e.g. uyarntoñ, ākuvatu, says Ku. Paramasivam. But
Israel, in his article, "The system of parts of speech in Tamil," asserts that
though structurally there are nouns formed of, or formed from verbal
roots their function at the syntactical level is the same as that of the
nouns.

Ku. Paramasivam, goes further to conclude that there have not been any
constructive solution or rules to guide how to categorise words.
Therefore, Nannülär’s concepts on word classes remain to be analysed.

Modern linguist T.P. Meenaaksisundaran opines that nouns and verbs are
the two categories in Tamil Language. 10 Israel suggests that ‘italicol’
should be taken as particles and allow three categories in Tamil Language.

10. Colliyal Katturalkal p.7
In Tamil, almost all the words are either nouns or verbs. New words which are being formed over the years can be easily considered as either nouns or compound verbs. In this context, Agesthialingom reasserts that the paradigm formulated by Naṉṉūlār could be a fair solution. One has to appreciate Naṉṉūlār's deep thought about words.

Forms like 'āṉāl', 'ēṉin' 'āyin' which act as adjectives are derived from verbs. Hence they do not constitute a separate category of words themselves. Adjectives and adverbs also do not occur as separate categories because they can be derived from 'Kurippu vināi murru'. Words like 'periya', 'ciriya' and 'ilaiya' are adjectives but have direct 'link' with the forms 'periyan', 'ciriyan' and 'ilaiyan' respectively, i.e. Kurippu vinai, says Agesthialingom.

Thus far, we have been seeing that Tamil words basically occur as either nouns or verbs, but rarely fall under any other categories. Naṉṉūlār and
many other traditional grammarians having noted this important point, gave due recognition by dealing more on nouns and verbs.

Why Nanṉūḷār did not discuss or categorise 'uricol' on par with nouns or verbs?

Siva Manikandarāman 11 explains about uricol. He says that there are definite rules on nouns, verbs and ṗṭaicol but 'uricol' do not contain such explicit rules. Even Tolkāppiyar and Nanṉūḷār do not seem to emphasize uricol in their discussions. But, there are many Śūtras in Tolkāppiyam and Nanṉūḷ which discuss about uricol, without giving a vivid explanation on what uricol is. They say that 'uricol' will undergo derivational processes to function as nouns and verbs or, will function their inclinations in its original form, elucidates Siva Manikandarāman. He adds that, 'uricol' could have been accepted from spoken Tamil, either polished or unpolished.

11. 5th journal, research seminar p. 731
Nannular mentions that ‘uricol’ is used only in poetic language. Later studies disapprove this saying.

Siva Manikandarāman, further adds that nouns and verbs may transform into itaicol; ‘uricol’ can transform into noun or verb.

He adds that, spoken Tamil, can be classified into ‘iyarcol’, ‘tiricol’ ‘Ticaiccol’ and ‘Vatacol’, These four kinds transform from a literature based on uricol. These words are the words called later as nouns and verbs and further as itaicol.

Therefore, there need not be a separate classification for uricol. This may be the stand for the traditional grammarian, including Nannular. This is further illustrated by the chart below.
It is interesting to note what Bloomfield says about parts of speech.

According to him, it is impossible to set up a fully consistent scheme of parts of speech, because the word-classes overlap and cross each other.

2.5 Nouns

Tolkāppiyar 12 says that all nouns, except, a class of verbal nouns, do not denote tense, it is evident that a noun does not take tense marker.

Nannūlar ascertains this in Sūtra 275.

12. Tol. 160
T.P. Meenakshisundaran briefly defines that a noun is what occurs as a subject and what can be declined.  

Nannūlār in Sūtra 275, includes adjectival participles as attributes i.e. (a noun is modified by the adjectival participles).

"Nouns are usually said to be words that refer to persons, places and things, and they usually do, but of course that is not how we know that they are nouns. We recognise certain words as nouns from the way in which they are used in sentences, and thus know that they refer to persons, places or things" says Roberts.

There is a contrast in definitions about nouns between Westerners and Tamil Scholars. Tolkāppiyar, Nannūlār or any other traditional grammarians did not stop there as Roberts did. They went further to give

13. A History of Tamil Language  p. 79
a vivid and accurate explanation.

How nouns are divided? What concepts does Nannular put forward to substantiate his arguments? These are the questions that need to be answered in the light of some modern linguists' perceptions.

Derivative principle yielded derivative nouns and inherent nouns; Agesthialingom supports this principle. For example 'Kannan' is an inherent noun, 'varukal' is a derivative noun.

'Semantic' principle gave two major classes of nouns in Tamil, i.e. rational class and non-rational class. Rational class includes human beings, hermaphrodites and gods and the non-rational class includes all other beings and things. This division of classes is based upon semantics e.g. 'manitan' is uyartinai; bird is akrinai.
There is another way to classify Tamil nouns, as to their functions. This 'functional principle' further classifies nouns as personal nouns, common nouns, pronouns, place nouns, numerals, mass nouns, count nouns, kinship nouns, verbal nouns, temporal nouns, etc.

e.g. 'He went to Kuala Lumpur'.

I saw Raman.

Here, Kuala Lumpur and Raman are examples for proper nouns. When one shows exactly a person or a place it is called a proper noun.

Otherwise, when you note a thing or things in common, then it will be called common noun, e.g. houses, rivers, etc.  

As for pronouns, C.F. Hockett says, 'As to domain-ties, the most widespread variety of substitutes is that which "replace" nouns, or one or another sub-class of nouns and noun phrases. When such substitutes are words or stems rather than bound affixes, they are called pronouns'.


16. A course in Modern Linguistics p. 257
Nida says that pronouns are grammatically related to nouns and that they are relatively short.

In Tamil, pronouns are called 'patilip peyar'. Pronoun is a word used for or instead of a noun, says Louis Gray.

e.g. 'Rāman natantu vantān'.

'avanukku cōru itu.'

In the above illustration, the word avanukku refers to Rāman. So 'avan' is called a pronoun.

Unless and until you refer, mere words do not portray the exactness. e.g. avanukku cōru itu. Without referring, the word 'avanukku' does not tell who the person is and so, pronouns are one form of defective nouns, says Agesthialingom.

17. Colliyal p.80
Though Tolkāppiyar refers to toliṟṟpeyar or verbal nouns sporadically, NaNṭūḷār refers to it in Sūtra 286. NaNṭūḷār divides verbal nouns into three kinds according to structural differences. They are verbal roots occurring as nouns; Verbal roots plus suffixes occurring as nouns; and finite verbs occurring as nouns.

e.g. urin(to rub), porun(to suit), man(to rule) — first division
cetal(she did), untal(she ate), otinal(she ran) — second division
vattavan(he who came), pāṭitavan(he who read) — third division

In short, nouns in Tamil can be classified according to gender, numerals, tinai, case derivative, semantic and structure.

The modern linguists do differ in classifying nouns. Veluppillai, classifies nouns into five fold. They are based on derivational basis: nouns which constitute just the ‘pakuti’. Nouns which cannot be separated as pakuti and vikuti; nouns which are derived from verbal stems; nouns which
originate from things or persons and nouns which come into being as compound forms.

S.V. Subramaniam divides nouns into thirty eight categories/kinds based on semantics. Israel makes six divisions. i.e. substantive nouns, pronouns, numerals, verbal nouns, pronominalised nouns and other derived nouns.

With all these perceptions, a noun may be divided into its constituents as below:

(root/stem) + (gender/numeral) + (cariyai) + (case marker)

eg. (i) Annanukku => anna + n + u + kku
    (ii) Aracanal => araca + n + al
    (iii) Kannan => kan + a + n

Nannulär classifies nouns into six categories on the basis of semantics, i.e. thing, place, time, limb, qualities, functions. He further divides nouns into three based on person, i.e. first person, second person and third person.
e.g. Nān – tanmai – first person

nínkai – munilai – second person

avan – patarkai – third person

While Tolkāppiyar assumes ‘first person’ to be uyartinai, Nānūlar accepts it for uyartinai and akriṇai. In Tolkāppiyar’s period, the word ‘nān’ was not in use, but Nānūlar gave due emphasis to ‘nān’ in Sūtra 285.

In the case of second person, both Tolkāppiyar and Nānūlar, agree that it is common to both the categories, uyartinai and akriṇai. Nānūlar adds few more words to the list of second person plural pronouns. He adds nivir, nir and elir.

When two persons engage in talking, both refer to the third person, then it is also called pronoun.
2.6 Metonymy (aku peyar)

Tolkāppiyar gives some explanation about metonymy in four Sūtras (598, 599, 600 and 601). None of these Sūtras really discuss about metonymy in detail, exclaims Innāsi.

Nānṉūlār discusses metonymy in Sūtra 290. Accordingly, Nānṉūlār defines metonymy as a noun which denotes another noun associated with it. It is also called synecdoche which is a figure of speech in which a part is used for a whole, an individual for a class, material for a thing or the reverse of any these.

e.g. bread for food, army for a soldier, country for its people or copper for a penny.

The commentator, Cāṅkara nāmaccivāyar, says that a metonymy should be one which is already prevalent, i.e. it is already there. Metony is not created nor derived. It’s occurrence in prose or poems is common.
Tolkāppiyar has given a lateral statement as stated by Cankara.

Tolkāppiyar says metonymy is ‘anai marapinave’ which is equivalent to ‘Tonmurai uraippana’.

Ilampūranar and Teyvaccilaiyār accept that metonymy can be created or derived, says A. Sivalinganar. Commentator Mayilaināthar lends support to Ilampūranar and Teyvaccilayār.

There can be some confusion over metonymy and anmolitokai, as both refer to the noun, next to its own. They are not same, says S. Paramasivam. Both differ in structure, appeal and place, adds S. Paramasivam.


17. Tol. 598, 599, 600, 601
18. Nan. 290
2.7 Cases

It is normal for linguists to differ in opinions when commenting on the structure and changes that take place in a language. Because of these distinctions, we see many articles and books are being produced. This same distinction is shared by Tolkāppiyar and Nāṉṉūlār, says Rāma sundram.

What were Nāṉṉūlār’s concepts on cases? What is a case? In sūtra 291, Nāṉṉūlār explains that a case changes the syntactic function of nouns. A noun changes its meaning from its own to another i.e. grammatical meaning.

Though the native grammarians have dealt with the cases, no adequate definition has been evolved, says Pon. Kothandaraman. He gives a new definition – i.e. A suffix that is responsible for the change of relationship of the noun to a verb in the sentence is called a case suffix and such relationships are called cases.
Case is the relation which a noun bears to another word in the same sentence. Hence, case is that which changes the syntactic relation of a noun with another word in a sentence with or without changing the morphological form of the corresponding noun.

In Tamil a case suffix occurs after a noun and it is optionally, or in some instances, obligatorily preceded by what is called cāriyal (empty morph) in the traditional grammar. The following will illustrate this:

e.g. Noun + cāriyal + case suffix

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{pāi} & \quad \text{+ in} \quad \text{+ ai} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{pālinai (milk-accusative)} \\
\text{pāl} & \quad \text{+ o} \quad \text{+ ai} \quad \rightarrow \quad \text{palai (milk accusative)}
\end{align*}
\]

It must be noted that a case suffix cannot be followed by another case suffix.
Generally, cases are classified in two ways. (i) based on meaning or function and (ii) based on forms. Nannular has given a numerical naming i.e. from first case to eighth case.

Tolkāppiyar has named the cases after the forms. Where it is not possible, he adopted numerical naming. Nannaḷḷar also does the same thing but there are differences in functions of cases. Basically, there can be three ways of naming cases i.e. naming after the form, naming after the function and naming according to the numerical order.

According to Nannaḷḷar, there are eight cases in Tamil. The first is called ‘peyar verrumai’ – nominative case or eluvai verrumai.

e.g. Ramaṇ Vantān – no case suffix

The second is accusative case. The case marker of this case is – ai. Tolkāppiyar gives almost twenty eight shades of meaning, while Nannaḷḷar restricts to only six.
The third case is an instrumental case. This case marker is suffixed to the agent or instrument of an action. This case is called instrumental because the things denoted by the nouns which take the third case marker, serve as instruments for the action. The case markers are – őtu, őtu, ál and án.

e.g. kattiyāl vettīnān (he used knife to cut) – instrument
tacanāl ceyappattatu (it was made by carpenter) – agent

The fourth case, according to Nānūlīr, denotes anything which is recipient. Thus it is evident that the fourth case marker is suffixed to the nouns denoting a recipient. The fourth case marker is – ku or kku.

A careful study shows that the fourth case marker extends its meanings to purpose, limit and relation.

e.g. Nānpanukku koṭu – benefactive

avanukku pakai – enmity

avanukku nānpan – friendship
In sūtra 298, Nāṇṉūḷar gives seven meanings for the fourth case marker.

In modern Tamil, the fifth case is usually indicated by the particle, iruntu.

Traditionally the case marker is – in. Nāṇṉūḷ says that this case denotes comparison, separation, similes, separation, boundary and cause.

The sixth case is genitive case. It shows the relationship between an object and its internal parts or between one object and another. It has – 'atu' as its case marker. But Nāṇṉūḷar added 'atu' and 'a' as additional case markers.

e.g. avanatu kai - his hand (atu)
Ninatu talai - your head (atu)
ena kaikal - my hands (a)

The case marker 'utaiya' has gained prominence now.

e.g. avanutaiya nūul - his book (utaiya)
The seventh case is locative case and denotes place, locality or time of action. It's case marker is-il.

**e.g.**

- ʻ*patattil alaku ūntu* - il (place)
- ʻ*vittil avan ūntu* - il (locality)
- ʻ*matattil malai ūntu* - il (time)

The last, eighth case, is vocative case. Though a number of commentators do not accept this as a case, Tolkāppiyar had devoted a whole chapter. Naṉṉūlār deals with the vocative, 'vill' in sutras 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309 and 310.

We have discussed all the eight cases found in Naṉṉūl. Let us consider why Naṉṉūlār figured out cases to be eight in number.

Caldwell says that there should be nine cases, Agesthialingom suggests that every language has its own number of cases. Languages differ
greatly in the number of cases they have developed. Greek has five,
Sanskrit eight, Finnish eighteen.  

English Language bases its grammar in line with that of Latin. Likewise,
may be Tamil Language derived its idea from Sanskrit, opines G. John
Samuel.

We have seen cases being named in three ways. One is after form; the
second is after the function; the third is after the numerical order. In
Tamil, each case suffix may take more than one function. In the third
case, the case suffix has three functions.

The fifth case-in and the seventh case-il have same function – at least
they do not differ much. There are new case suffixes in contemporary
Tamil. Therefore, to classify cases under their functions alone does not
help much.

20. Pillsbary and Meader. The psychology of language  p.288.
Language in contemporary use determine the number of cases in that particular language at a particular period. When one compares with other languages to determine cases in a particular language, there generally seems to be a shortcoming, says Otto Jespersen. (The system of grammar)

A table is drawn to indicate some changes in cases between Tolkāppiyar and Nānṉūḷār.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case no</th>
<th>Sutra no</th>
<th>Case Suffix</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Case no</th>
<th>Sutra no</th>
<th>Functions</th>
<th>Sutra No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>al</td>
<td>security compare...28</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>al</td>
<td></td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>557</td>
<td>otu</td>
<td></td>
<td>558</td>
<td>al, an</td>
<td></td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>ku</td>
<td></td>
<td>560</td>
<td>ku</td>
<td></td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>in</td>
<td></td>
<td>562</td>
<td>in</td>
<td></td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>atu</td>
<td></td>
<td>564</td>
<td>atu, atu a</td>
<td></td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>kaṉ, Puram</td>
<td></td>
<td>566</td>
<td>kaṉ, kāl</td>
<td></td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the above table, NāṇṆūḷār has given lesser functions for a particular case suffix when compared to Tolkāppiyar. At present, many new cases have emerged with new functions which will be mentioned in chapter four.

Tolkāppiyar gives three separate Chapters for cases but NāṇṆūḷār does not do so. NāṇṆūḷār gives some sutras dealing with cases immediately after nouns. He does not elaborate as Tolkāppiyar does.

But some commentators and modern linguists still opine that NāṇṆūḷār's stand that the number of cases must be eight is wrong because he did not base cases on fuction or suffixes but merely followed Sanskrit and Tolkāppiyam.

2.8 Verbs

NāṇṆūḷār in Sūtra 320 attempts to explain about verb in a general manner. Tolkāppiyar says that verbs do not accept cases but denote time. The verb is a part for speech without case inflections, admitting
inflections of tense, persons and number, signifying an activity or state of being.

Nannular further adds that the six elements such as agent, object, time, action, instrument and place are indicated by a finite verb.

Tholkāppiyar gives several names which describe a verb such as Vinaicol Kilavi, Tolil, Tolirrcol, Kalakkilavi, etc.

The author of 'illakana vilakam' explains a verb by stressing that a verb should be an element indicating static/dynamic action etc. Thus, 'iru', 'nata', 'nakar' etc. are some examples which fit the criteria. What about verbs like 'ninai', 'ennu'? Do they show 'puțaippeyarcci' (actual happening) as well? Words like 'paci', 'kulir' show the state of a being. How to explain that these words contain 'puțaippeyarcci'? asks Agesthialingom.

21. Lyons. p.319
Jespersen gives a more precise explanation. Verbs show actions, process and state or condition.

Within a structure, verbs function as predicates. Almost all the sentences finish with a verb. Having noted its occurrence and vitality, some transformational grammarians, including Otto Jespersen, believe that verbs are the most important elements in any sentences.

Thus far, we have seen what a verb is. Now, let us analyse the classifications of verbs by Nānūlar and others.

Tolkapiyar classifies vinai as Kurippu and Terinilai. He also introduces rational class of verbs and non-rational class of verbs.

Nānūlar also states verbs as Kurippu and Terinilai and adds on to say more divisions like finite verbs, non-finite verbs, participles, etc.
The finite verbs may be classified into two main classes on the basis of the presence or the absence of pronominal terminations. Those which take the personal or pronominal terminations may be identified as the personal finite verbs and those which do not take the said terminations may be identified as impersonal finite verbs.

e.g. personal finite verbs

- vantēn, vantāy, vantān.

The impersonal finite verbs do not denote person, number and gender but occur as predicates.

e.g. avan vālka-may he prosper.

The non-finite verbs are divided into two classes viz., adverbial participles and adjectival participles. These non-finite verbs are Nāṇṇūḷar's contribution to Tamil grammar says Rāma Sundram. He adds that though Nāṇṇūḷar had emulated Tolkāppiyar's work but Nāṇṇūḷar, in many instances has made himself felt by clearly stating his new rules. Clear
terminologies for the adjectival and adverbial participles are also such novelties. ‘Viyanḵol vinai murrū’ does not appear in first person and second person during Tolkāppiyar’s era.

e.g. ni valka, yan valka.

But now, it appears in all places i.e. first person, second person and third person. Tolkāppiyar did not mention about viyanḵol terminations but some commentators mentioned them. i.e. a al and ala. Nannūlār adds, ‘ka’, ‘ya’ and ‘r’ to the list.

Nannūlār adds ‘ceykinra’ pattern to adjectival participle. During Tolkāppiyar’s era, only ‘ceyta’ and ‘ceyyum’ pattern were in force; the former denotes past tense and the latter denotes both the present and future tenses.
2.9 Adverbial participles (Vinaiyeccam)

The structure and functions of adverbial participles are dealt by Tolkāppiyar in depth. He also gives many patterns which are used for adverbial participles. Nevertheless, A. Chittiraputhiran, opines that only Nannūlār explains adverbial participles well.

Nannūlār deals with adverbial participles in Sūtra 342. He says that adverbial participles contain action/function and time. But there is no gender. Tolkāppiyar gives nine patterns but Nannular deletes 'ceyyatku' pattern and adds 'ceyya', 'vān', 'pān' and 'pākku' to sum up to twelve. He tries his level best to ascertain time element in those twelve patterns.

P. Māthaiyan gives a contradicting view about adverbial participles. When Nannūlār says that time element is present in an adverbial participle, P. Mathaiyan disputes it. He argues that there are no gender, and time elements. Let us look at his example below:
eg. (i) Uṇtu vanta paiyan - boy who has eaten
(ii) Uṇtu varukinra paiyan - boy who comes after eating
(iii) Uṇtu varum paiyan - boy who will come after eating.

In all these phrases, the 'vīnai eccam', 'uṇtu' does not denote gender and 'vanta' denotes time; 'varukinra' denotes time; 'varum' denotes time. Hence, the adverbial participle, uṇtu, does not indicate time directly.

Even 'Kūṭtu vinaieccam' does not contain time element, says P. Māthaiyan.

eg. (i) Cātaṇ Vantāṇ Nāṇ Varuvēn
(ii) Avar Varumun nān Vanten

The terminations 'pīṇ' and 'mūn' join with adjectival participle and nullify the time element in the adjectival participle to derive the kūṭtu vīnai eccam. 'Vantāṇ' indicates past tense and 'varumun' denotes future tense, due to the context of their occurrence. But 'pīṇ' and 'mūn' merely
act as conditions or state of being and definitely do not denote time
element, argues P. Mathaiyan; his opinion is a controversial one.

2.10 Adjectival Participle (Peyareccam)

In Sūtra 340, Nannūlar defines peyareccam. Vellupplai firmly states that
Nannūlar is the first person who so ever gave proper definition for
peyareccam.

‘Ceyyum’ and ‘Ceyta’ are patterns for adjectival participle, according to
Tolkāppiyar. ‘Ceykira’, ‘Ceykinra’, ‘Ceyyānninra’ were not found in
Sangam literature, admits P.S.S. Sasthiriyar.

These patterns are found in later literature and inscriptions. Author of
‘Viracoliyam’ uses ‘Ceykira’ pattern. Contemporary Tamil uses more
pattern like ‘ceyyata’, ‘ceyyāmalirukkum’, ‘ceyyappatum’,
‘ceyyappatukirn’, ‘ceyyappatta’, etc.
2.11 Kurippu vinai or appellative verb

This kind of verb shows time element but indirectly. This is not enough, according to commentator Teyvaccillaiyar. A further investigation in Kurippu vinai allows us to assume that it does not show distinction between time elements. There is no index which shows time on Kurippu.

There are some who say that the word 'Kurippu' denotes time, yet there are some who say, it shows action indirectly. Israel, in justifying both groups says Kurippu contains both action and time.

Jules Bloch, made an indepth study into the forms of Kurippu vinai and gives his views. Let us look at the structure per se.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>noun stem</th>
<th>adjectival stem</th>
<th>defective verb stem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. kaccinan</td>
<td>Kariyan</td>
<td>ulan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- kaccu + in + an</td>
<td>Karu(kari) + i + an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Anpan</td>
<td>Nallan</td>
<td>allan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- anpu + an</td>
<td>- Nal + an</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The above table shows that all words with nominal, adjectival or defective verbal stems function as predicates and they are appellative verbs i.e. Kurippu Vināimuttaaru.

All these appellative verbs which have noun stems, adjectival stems and defective verb stems do not show time element as they are but to some extent, they denote actions, says Israel.

Some grammarians say finite verbs (Terinilai vinal) show tense. Let us understand this from the chart below:

(1) Verbal stem – tense – gender suffix
   a) cey – t – ān > ceytan
   b) ētu – īn – āl > ētināl

(2) Verbal stem – negative – gender
   a) cey – a – ān > ceyyan
   b) ētu – a – ātu > ētatu

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All the above are examples of ‘ternilai vinai’, says Pon. Kothandarāman.

Nannūlār enlists ‘ternilai murru’ and numbers them as twenty seven. Till now, Nannūlār’s concepts on terinillai and Kurippu are accepted widely.

2.12 Structure of Nannūl

Thus far we have been seeing how Nannūlār tackles issues on grammar, right from his concepts on grammar as a whole right down to individual grammatical categories.

How did he structure the contents so as to make Nannūl appealing to users?

Nannūlār had read books on Tamil grammar and Sanskrit grammar. We understand this from the commentators views. He understood the need for a contemporary grammar of Tamil, says Rāma Sundram.
Sage Pavananthi also understood, who were his clients before him. So, he took extra care to convey the context in a simple, explicit manner; he also took care in writing the contents employing good yappu so as to attract the readers. All these are evident in his earlier Sūtras.

In short, his Sūtras are structured intact, with shortened appealing terminologies. He embraces his former grammarians’ views very well and supports wherever possible. At the same time, he does not hesitate to express his own views freely.

His views and Tolkāppiyar’s views run parallel in the Eluttatikāram and collatikāram, yet at times Nānṉūlār differs from Tolkāppiyar and introduces new concepts which have become pillars for modern grammar.

Rāma Sundram does not fail to put forward instances where Nānṉūlār has left some grammatical ideas behind. He even says that he feels sorry for Nānṉūlār.
The phrase ‘tanul uruta panmai’ became ‘tanmai panmai’, ‘vinaienyu kilavi’ and ‘peyarenyu kilavi’ became vinaieccam and peyareccam. Likewise, Naññulär made remarkable inroad in constructing appealing terminologies and they were widely accepted by people at large.

In his book, Naññul, Elutu and Col were dealt with indepth yet with precision in 407 Sutras. 55 Sutras are found in Potuppäyiram. So, all 462 Sutras were structured carefully to meet the demand of the time.

In constructing the chapter on Payiram(Introduction), Naññulär has made efforts to bring in Sutras from Tolkäppiyam, Irailañär kalaviyal urai, Yapparunʔala virutiyurai and Illampūrar’s urai to strengthen the concepts.
The table below tells us the structure of Nāññul.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter on Eluttu</th>
<th>No. of Sūtras</th>
<th>Chapters on Col</th>
<th>No. of Sūtras</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Eluttiyal</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>peyariyal</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pataviyal</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Vinaiyiyal</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Uyirirtrup</td>
<td></td>
<td>Potuviyal</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>punariyal</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Meyyitrup</td>
<td></td>
<td>Itaiiyiyal</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>punariyal</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Urupupunariyal</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Uriiyiyal</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>202</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total-202+205</td>
<td>=407</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 6. Payiram(Introduction) | 54 |
| 7. Special Introduction  | 1  |

Total = 407 + 54 + 1

= 462