CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 Current relevance

In his book, Nannul, Sage Pavananti has given grammatical facts in the form of nūrpa, collected in two major portions, as we have seen in Chapter Three; one is eluttatikāram (Phonology) and the other Collatikāram (Morphology and Syntax).

To fulfill the aim of this research in general and this chapter in particular, the author makes an effort to evaluate the facts conveyed by the nūrpa in pataviyal (phonology), and Collatikāram (morphology).

To sum up, the writer has considered 170 sūtras, which deal with the morphology of Tamil.

i.e. Elutu - pataviyal - 128 – 150 (23)
    Col - nouns - 258 – 319 (63)
    - verbs - 320 – 351 (32)
    - itaicol - 420 – 441 (22)
The author believes that, Nāñṉūlār has expressed his thoughts in the sūtras mentioned above about Col (morphology). So, the author's main aim is to analyse to see whether Nāñṉūlār's concepts and theories about Tamil grammar and linguistics are still applicable to contemporary Tamil. In order to do so, the author has categorised the abovementioned sūtras into four main divisions. The four categories are, sūtras with inapplicable rules (obsolete), sūtras with partially inapplicable rules, sūtras with applicable rules (relevant) and sutras with rules which can be used with slight modifications.

In our times, Tamil mass media as well as Tamil formal and informal educational systems use the grammatical rules found in the two main
treatises i.e. Tolkāppiyam and Nānṉūl, as guidance for the use of proper Tamil.

The present research focuses only on Nānṉūl’s rules. It is the author’s duty to highlight if any of Nānṉulār’s sutras are found to be obsolete i.e. The obsoleteness must be justified too.

If only part of some sutras has lost its effectiveness then, suggestions from modern linguists will be given to make those sutra useful. The sutras which are still applicable will be given the title as “relevant sutras”.

For sutras which are partially applicable, suggestions will be given to modify these sutras so that they will become applicable for modern Tamil. Finally, some new features of modern Tamil, for which Nānṉūl does not account, will be mentioned.
4.1 Obsolete rules

Tolkāppiyar, mentions about finite verbal forms (mutrecam), which are followed by finite verbs, and therefore the former function as verbal participles.

e.g. Untān Vantān - 'He ate and came'

There is no occurrence in modern Tamil where two finite verbs follow one another. In modern Tamil, the sentence, "Untān Vantān", is used as Untu Vantān (having eaten, he came).

No one uses finite verb followed by a finite verb today. Nannular also maintains this statement of Tolkappiyar. As regards finite verbs functioning as verbal participle, nevertheless this fact is not in vogue now.

Now, on analysing the rules on morphology, it is gratifying to note that most of the rules are still useful for contemporary Tamil.
4.2 Partially applicable rules/relevant rules

The śūtras which pronounce rules as partially applicable to modern Tamil still exist. Almost all the modern linguists, will disagree with the parts of speech mentioned by Tolkappiyar and Nāṉṉūlār. Both say that there are four grammatical categories in Tamil Language. Namely, nouns, verbs, non-root forms (bound morphemes) and word roots. Though both indicate that nouns and verbs are actually words (free morphemes) while the other two, do not qualify to be words, there are many more grammatical categories which have come into use in modern Tamil and which do not fall under any of the four categories mentioned. We will discuss about the new grammatical categories later in this chapter.

According to Pon. Kothandaraman, the classification of words by the traditional grammarians, Tolkāppiyar and Nāṉṉūlār is rather inadequate for modern Tamil, for it has developed new categories such as adjectives, adverbs, postpositions, aspects and modals.
He opines that, though all the new categories may be traced to the four categories from the historical point of view, yet a descriptive grammar must account for all these classes of words without involving the history. English language has nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections as it's parts of speech. Tamil language, as a result of its contact with English and other languages, has evolved into a modern language consisting new elements.

It is impossible to set up a fully consistent scheme of parts of speech because the word classes overlap and cross each other. As Bloomfield says it is not proper for any traditional grammarian to limit the number of parts of speech. In the course of time, some parts of speech will emerge to strengthen any language, or some will vanish.

Accepting that nouns and verbs as basic grammatical elements of Tamil language, Nāṇṉūlār has also said itaiccol (bound morphemes) and uriccol (word roots) will appear along with nouns and verbs.
Itaiccol means non-root form which cannot stand by its own and it has no lexical meaning but grammatical meaning. Modern linguists would classify Itaiccol (particles/suffixes) as bound morphemes, which are usefully employed in the derivation or inflections of words. It is difficult to define particles. Nannūl simply enumerates the different kinds of grammatical forms.

The term ‘Uriccol’ literally means ‘words of propriety’. These words are generally placed before the words they qualify. These may qualify nouns and/or verbs.

Tolkāppiyar describes uriccol as, originating on the basis of sound, implied meaning or quality; they appear along with nouns and verbs or, are transformed as nouns and verbs. Nannūlār, while describing about uriccol also says that uriccol is used in poetry, i.e., literary language.
Tolkāppiyar's definitions of uriccol is very implicit that scholars have controversy in their comprehension about uriccol.

Contemporary scholars put forth a number of theories; but they do not seem applicable to all the words listed under 'Uriccol' by Tolkāppiyar, Nannūlār and later-day grammarians. The theories are (1) the separate part of speech theory, (2) the poetical usage theory, (3) the dhatu/root theory (a word root), (4) the adjectives and adverbs theory and (6) the obsolete words theory.

According to Hockett, "a part of speech is a form-class of stems which shows similar behaviour in inflexion, in syntax or in both. A part of speech in a system of language is the classification of its stems on the basis of similarities and differences of inflectional and syntactical behaviour. The stems which follow a particular pattern of usage but do not follow some other pattern may be grouped into a class."
From Hockett's definition, the "separate part of speech theory" does not hold true for Uriccol because some of the forms of uriccol (Ex. uṟu, tava, nani, etc.) are not capable of being inflected for any grammatical category; but occur as attributes at the syntactical level.

Ceṉāvaraiyar states that there are some learned men who hold that 'Uriccols' is called so, since it generally occurs in poetry. The author of Nannūl also defines that 'Uriccol' is that which is exclusively used in poetry; Tolkāppiyar does not give such an explanation. Since the examples for 'uriccol' have been given from poetry by the commentators and as no such examples come from modern Tamil, it is evident that this second theory i.e. poetic usage theory, does not enrich our argument. Hence, Nannūlar's statement is about those words which have become obsolete with the passage of time.

Dhatu is, according to Sanskrit grammarians, a word root. The terms tava, nani, uṟu, atri, uṟu, erul, urum, etc., cannot be transformed into
other words. Thus, Dhatu theory propounded by Teyvacilaiyār may not be true.

E.g. erul - strength

urum - fear
ari - softness

uru - fear

P.S. Sāstri, T.P. Meenakshisundaran, and Ilakkuvanār are some of the scholars who opine that ‘uriccol’ is a root morpheme. P.S. Sāstri states that the list of ‘Uriccols’ given by Tolkāppiyar as well as Nannulār, may be divided into verbal roots and nominal roots. Ilakkuvanār says that semantemes are ‘Uriccols’.

Though a majority of the forms are either nominal or verbal roots, there are a few words whose forms are not, mere roots, but roots with suffixes. Hence, it is also difficult to conclude that ‘uriccols’ are root morphemes.
Caldwell considers 'Uriccol' as adjectives while Vaiyāpuri Pillai treats 'Uriccol' as adjuncts. Winslow identifies a few forms of 'Uriccol' as adjectives and a few others as adverbs. Emeneau and Burrow also agree with Winslow. Zvelebil takes the term 'Uriccol' to mean qualifiers.

None of the above theories seem satisfactory. Thus, it is concluded that Nānṉulār's definition on 'Uriccol' in sūtra 442, is not complete and may be considered as partially obsolete. This is ascertained by Rāmaṇucakkavirāyar, in his commentary on Nānṉul.

T.P. Meenakshisundaran gives good reason as to why Nānṉulār went wrong in defining 'Uriccol'. Nānṉulār has considered 'uriccol' to be equivalent as 'tiricol' and vice versa; 'tiricols' are usually found in poetry. Hence, Nānṉulār went astray in defining uriccol.
The next category involves sutras which need to be modified a little. This means some additional facts need to be added in order to make them currently relevant.

In sūtra number 259, NāṇṈūḷār defines the Tamil word on the basis of morphology, syntax, usage and semantics. According to that sutra, there is five-fold gender distinction in Tamil language. The five genders in Tamil are Masculine singular, Feminine singular, Epicene plural, neuter singular, and neuter plural. The first three belong to the rational category while the latter belong to non-rational category. This is shown in the following diagram.

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nouns (and verbs)

rational class
('uyartīnal')

Masculine Feminine Epicene
Singular Singular Plural

non-rational class
(akrīnal)

Neuter Neuter
Singular Plural
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According to Nāṉṉūlār the Epicene plural words end in – r or –kal (sūtra 278). In contemporary Tamil, an enormous number of words which end in –r do not indicate plurality; instead they indicate respect.

*e.g:* arinar - learned person

āciriyar- teacher

avar - he (with respect)

In sūtra number 262, Nāṉṉūlār explicitly states the three genders under ‘Uyartinaig (rational class), - i.e., masculine singular, feminine singular and Epicene plural). Hence, modern Tamil seems to be using a distinct category which can be identified as a honorific category. As said above, words ending in – r were used as plural in earlier Tamil. Nowadays, words ending in – r are generally used as honorific singular; though a few words with – r final, still indicate plurality, they seem insignificant compared to the number of such words used as honorific singular. Words such as makalir, vanitaiyar, māṅkaiyar and naṅkaiyar indicate plural; it is interesting to note all the four words mean ‘ladies/woman’. Some words
with 'r-final', indicate plurality only in a particular context, viz. singular-
maanavar (student), plural -mānavar mandram (student association),
ilaiñar(youth).

Hence, a grammar for modern Tamil, requires a singular honorific
category to aptly analyse and describe the language.

Nannūlar discusses the case markers and the inflection of nominals from
sūtras 291-319, in Peyariyal.

According to Pavananti, there are eight cases in Tamil Language. They are
nominative (subject), accusative (object), instrumental (Sociative),
dative, ablative, genitive, locative and vocative.

The case markers occur after the nouns, i.e., they are suffixed directly to
the nouns or to the 'Cāriyais' (empty morphs) which are affixed to nouns
before the suffixation of case markers.
e.g.: 1. aval-ai (without căriyai)

2. Nul-in-ai (with căriyai)

In Tamil, the Case markers do not change with regard to gender and number but remain the same for all the genders and numbers. It must be noted here that a case suffix cannot be followed by another case suffix.

Nannulăr discusses the different shades of meaning of each of the cases in separate sutras. i.e. form 295-304. Before venturing further, let us discuss the definition of case by Pavananti. Any noun which takes a case will have a change in its syntactic function. Commentators of Nannul have tried to interpret this sutra to give a clear explanation. Nevertheless, the modern linguists’ definition for cases is comprehensive. According to Pon. Kothandaraman, ‘A suffix that is responsible for the change of relationship of the noun to a verb in a sentence is called a case suffix and such relationships are called cases’. Morphologically the case suffix occurs after a noun, but syntactically it has a close relation to a
verb. This new definition for case will help to modify Nānṉūlār's sutra number 291 which defines 'case'.

The Tamil language, in the course of time, has developed new meanings for the suffixes and new suffixes with new meanings as well. Hence let us have a look at the eight cases, analytically.

In Sūtra 295, Nānṉūlār explains about the nominative case (First Case). The noun in its natural uninflected form is said to occur in the first case. There is no suffix. The noun occurring as the subject of a sentence, is said to be in the nominative case. However, it cannot be generalised that all nouns which are used without case-endings are in the nominative case because many of the other cases drop their signs for the sake of euphony and elegance of expressions.

In Sūtra 296, Nānṉūlār enumerates six meanings to the case 'ai' (accusative or object), but according to K. Thilagawathi, this case 'ai' also
occurs with the meanings of the case 'ōtu' (third case) and 'vittu' (fifth case).

e.g.: (1) āciriyarōtu kalantālocittā

āciriyaraik kalantālocittā

"(she) discussed with the teacher"

(2) Uyir Utalaip pirintatu

Uyir Utalaivittup pirintatu

"The soul departed from the body".

According to S.Innasi, the case 'al' had about 28 meanings during Tolkāppiyar's period but had only 6 meanings during Nāṉṉūlār's period. This shows that the development of Tamil Language had greatly contributed to its change in cases and their meanings. Not only the second case, in fact, all the cases (2-7) are given numerous meanings in Tolkāppiyam, but relatively few meanings in Nāṉṉūl. This may be because the number of meanings of a particular case suffix reduced
during Nannūlār’s time, or, Nannūlār generalised and summarised the facts given by Tolkāppiyar. Nevertheless, Tamil cases, have gone through the changes with the passages of time.

The third case (instrumental) suffix has 4 allomorphs. i.e. ‘al’, ‘an’, ‘ōtu’, and ‘ōtu’. In modern Tamil the suffix ‘Konțu’ is used as an alternative to ‘al’ and the suffix ‘utan’ is used as an alternative to both ‘ōtu’ and ‘ōtu’.

This fact is mentioned by some of the recent commentators of Nannūl (Nannūl Kāntikaiyurai, Kalaka veliyētu, pg. 260).

e.g.  

(1) Vālal Vettinān - Val Konțu Vettinān

(2) Ennōtu Vantān - Ennuțan Vantān

(3) Avanōtu iruntān - Avanuțan iruntān

Of the two suffixes, ‘al’ and ‘ōtu’, the first denotes cause, agent or instrument and the second provides associative meaning.
There is no change in the fourth case suffix (dative) i.e. 'ku' but K. Thilagawathi states that the term 'dative' which is generally used to indicate the meaning of this case is not apt. She notes that these are two major meanings for -ku: benefactive and destination/goal; when -ku is used with nouns of place, -ku indicates destination.

e.g. (1) Mannar Pulavarkup Paricalitār - (benefactive)

Naan Vittukup Pokireñ - (destination)

In Sūtra number 299, Nāṇṇūḷār talks about the fifth case (ablative) and its suffixes, 'in' and 'il'. Today, the suffix 'in' is not used but the suffix 'iruntu' is used extensively. So, 'in' is obsolete now. When the partical -iruntu is used with the nouns of rational category, -ītam precedes the particle; when used with nouns of non-rational category , -il precedes -iruntu.

eg. Antap Periyavartiṭamiruntu parisu pettron.

(He received a present from that elderly man).
During Nannul’s period, the suffixes ‘atu’, and ‘atu”, were used for singular and ‘a’ for plural, to indicate the genitive case; i.e., the sixth case. Today, ‘atu’ is obsolete and the particle, ‘utaiya’, and suffix, ‘in’ are being used.

eg. Murukanutaiya Vitu -(murugan’s house)

Murukanin Vitu -(murugan’s house)

Pon. Kothandaraman argues that genitive is not a case. In his book(lalakkana ulakil puthiya parvai-2), he points out that he is rather pessimistic in calling-atu a case, since nouns in this case, function as some sort of adjectives.

The main suffix for the seventh case is –kan. Nannul gives 27 more suffixes along with the suffix, -kan. The meaning is locative. Nannul says that the seventh case suffixes denote place; but Tolkappiyar says that the seventh case suffix indicates location of space as well as time.
The prominent suffix in modern Tamil is ‘il’ which normally denotes place; it denotes time as well.

eg. Paravai Marattil Amarntatu - (The bird sat on the tree) (place)

Kārtikaiyil Malai Varum - (It rains during the month of Kartikai)

Pon. Kothandaraman clarifies the functions of the locative case in his book (ilakkaṇa ulakil puthiya pārvai-2) and further suggests that the suffix ‘āka’ ought to be considered as an eighth case suffix, giving the due reasons. He asserts that the particles ‘uṭaiya’, ‘iruntu’, ‘ninru’ were derived from verbs ‘uṭal’, ‘iru’ and ‘nil’ respectively. This is so with ‘āka’ which is from the verb ‘ā’. Today, the root, ā, of the particle, āka, is not realised.

Finally, we talk about the eighth case, i.e., vocative. The vocative or ‘vill’ case is rather different from the other cases. It is important to note that nouns do not change into oblique forms, before taking the vocative suffix.
e.g. Maram-attu-ai = Marattinai - (accusative)

Maramē - (vocative)

This cāriyal, attu, is used for accusative and other cases specially with words ending in -m; it is not so for vocative case. All vili suffixes are added directly to the nouns without the assistance of any cāriyal.

Tolkāppiyar and Nannūlār give vivid explanations about the vili case. Nannūlār talks about vocative case and some related facts from Sūtras 303-316 under peyariyal, but Tolkāppiyar has dealt with vili in a separate chapter. The sūtras dealing with the vili case are still found to be generally relevant. The last three sūtra (316 – 319) of peyariyal, which also speak about the vocative case, also seem relevant.

Tolkāppiyar says that according to the scholars prior to him, there are seven cases. In the following sūtra, he says that cases will be eight in number if the vocative case is included. In fact, all the commentators do
not give importance to the vocative as it's function is different from the others, i.e. a noun in the vocative case is not in close relationship with the verbs.

According to NāṇṆūḷār also, there is no proper marker for the vocative case. There are basically two kinds of vocatives i.e. proximate vocative and remote vocative.

eg. tāmpi - (proximate)

    tāmpi - (remote)

The purpose of the vocative is to draw the attention of the persons addressed to. This is done by lengthening the final or penultimate vowels in the nouns and raising the voice, according to the requirement of the situation.

NāṇṆūḷār discusses about the ambiguity of cases (urupu mayakkam) in Āraṇyaka Sūtra 317, while Tolkāppiyar talks about it in a separate chapter. When
a case marker is used with a meaning other than its own (i.e. to denote a meaning which is not within its range), this phenomenon is known as casal ambiguity. This is known as ‘urupu mayakkam’ in Tamil; Tolkāppiyar calls it vētrumai mayakkam.

Nannūlār has devoted a separate chapter for verb, and has dealt with verb in 32 Sūtras. A verb is that which does not take any case marker but takes or is capable of taking tense marker. (Tol: 683)

Nannūlār (Nan: 320) gives a satisfactory definition for verb but modern linguists do not consider it to be complete. P. S. Sāstri thinks that ‘viṇai’ (verb), according to Tolkāppiyar, denotes action and time and does not take case suffixes after it. The time can be overtly or covertly marked.

Nannūlār states that a finite (Terinilai) verb is that which indicates the following six facts, viz. agent, instrument, place, action, time and object. Thus, in the sentence, “Kuyavaṇ Kuṭatai Vaṇaintān” (the potter made the
pot), the potter is the agent, the clay and wheel are instruments, the making is the action, past tense is the time, and the pot is the object. He further says in Sūtra 321, that there is another kind of verb which is called appellative verb which indicates only the agent.

The verb is defined by Dionysios Thrax as a word without cases, indicative of tenses and persons and numbers denoting an act or state. (Gray Louis, 1939, Foundations of Language p.177-178). Modern Linguists opine that 'a verb or compound verb asserts something about the subject of the sentence and expresses actions, events, or states of being'.

Tolkāppiyar enumerates eight cases that may be governed by a verb. They are the action, the doer, the object of the verb, the place, the time, the instrument, the receipient and the purpose of doing.

Nānṉūḷar's Sūtra about a verb is not comprehensive; Tolkāppiyar's explanation is linguistically relevant, though not complete, i.e a verb is
that which does not take case marker but takes or is capable of taking tense marker.

Regarding appellative verbs, Nannūlār is of the opinion that it shows time indirectly. Many scholars and modern linguists feel that Nannūlār maybe wrong. T.P. Meenakshisundaran, says that time element is not the criterion to classify finite verbs and appellative verbs. He adds that if a noun explicitly shows an action, event or state of being, then it qualifies to be a finite verb.

Further more finite verb can be modified by adverbial participle but not appellative verbs.

Appellative verbs do not show tense when they are in isolation but will seem to show tense in a suitable sentential context.

Ex. Nallan (no definite tense)

He (is) good
Avan Munpu Nallan (past tense)
He (was) good, before

Both the above examples denote same thing.

Tamil grammarians consider the 'Kurippu' or appellative verbs also as verbs though there is no tense marker in them. Tolkāppiyar says that tense is implied in Kurrippu. He adds that the nature of the actions is implied in Kurippu, not tense. Hence, the contents of suṭra 321 may have to be retained and given the necessary explanations.

Appellative verbs were existent in old Tamil; in Modern Tamil appellative verbal forms are realised as nouns. Hence, these are no appellative verbs as far as contemporary Tamil is concerned. Nervertheless, an awareness of appellative verbs is useful for better comprehension of old Tamil. Moreover, forms such as nalla, periya etc., which are known as adjectives in contemporary Tamil, were originally verbal participles derived from appellative verbs such as nallan, periyan, etc. This awareness helps us
not to add an extra plosive \((k,c,t,p)\) to the appellative adjectival
participles like nalla, periya, etc. when they are followed by nouns with
initial plosives. (Nan: 347)

Though many scholars refuse to accept the verbal status of appellative
verbs, there are scholars who acknowledge appellative verbs and make an
effort to provide some enlightening facts about those verbs. According to
Israel, appellative verbs have given rise to two kinds of word classes,
viz., pronominalised nouns and defective verbs. Two prominent linguists,
i.e., T.P. Meenakshisundaran and Pon. Kothandaraman, have given the
most useful explanations. These scholars share the same view.

Pon. Kothandaraman's views on appellative verbs are:

1. Nouns, which name things, place, time, limb, quality and action, form
the base of appellative verbs. Person gender number suffixes an, al, r,
tu or a are used to derive appellative verbs from these nominal bases.
2. When cāriyal (inflectional increment) is used for the derivation of appellative verbs, it is the cariyai -in which is used; the cāriyal, -an is used in finite verbs.

e.g.  ponnan or ponninan - (he (is) with gold)

- (he has gold)

vantaan or vantanan - (he came)

3. There are only two segments in Kurippu but finite verbs have three.

i.e.  appellative: Root + PNG suffix

Pon + an = ponnan

finite : Root + Tense marker + PNG suffix

Col + V + an

4. Appellatives do not have their corresponding imperative forms; finite verbs have their corresponding imperative forms.

Nevertheless, Pon. Kothandaraman says that appellative verbs are currently not in use or very rarely used. They are probably modified into
participle nouns in modern Tamil, e.g., nallavan. The explanations given by Pon. Kothandaraman and the other scholars can be used to give the necessary explanations for the contents of Sūtra 321.

4.3 PARTICIPLES

We have seen that verbs can be either finite or non-finite. Non-finite finite verbs can further be divided into two classes, viz., adjuncts of verbs or adverbial participles and adjuncts of nouns or adjectival participles. Nāṇṉulār calls non-finite forms of verbs as 'eccam'. Non-finite verbs are equivalent to English participles in their function.

In Sūtra 340, Nāṇṉul states the paradigmatic forms for the past, present and future adjectival particles, using the verbal root cey - (do), viz., ceyta, ceykinra and ceyyum. These non-finite verbs are common to both the rational and the non-rational classes.
The forms ‘Ceyta’ and ceykinra consist of the verbal stem, the past-tense and present tense markers respectively and the adjectival participle marker, a. The form ‘Ceyyum’ consists of the verbal stem and non-past marker -um.

Tolkappiyar mentions only the forms ceyta and ceyyum; Nāṉṉūlār has added the present tense form, ceykinra. Sūtra 339 says that the words vēru, unṭu and illai are common to all the five genders and three places. Nāṉṉūlār says they are appellative finite verbs. Today, the word ‘alla’ has gained prominence in Tamil on par with vēru, unṭu and illai.

  e.g. pātiyatu avanalla - it is not he who sang (the song).
  alaittatu unkalaiyalla - it is not you who were called.

In old Tamil, the negative root, al-, took the various PNG suffixes. In contemporary Tamil the form, alla, is used for all persons, numbers and gender. Hence, alla too, will have to be added to the defective verb, vēru,
unțu, illai; in fact in modern Tamil Unțu is seldom used for the nouns in the rational category.

As for the adverbial participles, Tolkāppiyar gave nine patterns and six particles which will derive adverbial participles from verbal roots; Nāṇṉūḷar gives twelve paradigmatic forms. In his Sūtra 344, Nāṇṉūḷar adds on three particles i.e. vān, pān, pākku. Nāṇṉūḷar deletes the pattern ‘ceyatku’ from Tolkāppiyar and adds ‘Ceyya’. He goes further to predict the tenses for his twelve patterns.

Chithiraputhiran (historical study of Tamil verbal participles, āyuvkōval, p.145–151) says that the particle ‘vān’ and ‘pān’ are still used but ‘pākku’ is only found in Tirukkural and the forms with ‘pākku’, behave like verbal nouns in six places in Tirukkural, not as verbal participles. So, we can conclude that the particle ‘pākku’, is found to be obsolete now.
4.4 İtaiccol

Nannūlar explains about particles/suffixes from Sūtra 420 to 441. Particles are considered to have no meaning by themselves like nouns, verbs and qualifying words, but they are most usefully employed in derivational and inflectional processes.

Tolkāppiyar (Tey, A Commentary On TC, 245) and Nannūlar (Nan: 420) explicitly stated that ‘İtaiccol’ do not occur in isolation; they form part of, or occur, with nouns or verbs, thus indicating that they are not independent forms.

Tolkāppiyar gives seven kinds of İtaiccol while Nannūlar has given eight. This is a ‘controversy’. The divisions are (1) cāriyai or inflexional increment, (2) PNG suffixes, tense markers/noun derivatives, (3) case markers, (4) expletive particles, (5) euphonic particles, (6) suggestive particles and (7) particles of comparison.
Nānṉūlār adds 'tattam porula' to the list of itaiccol to make it eight. Tolkāppiyar has included Nānṉūlār's 'tattam porula' under suggestive particles (kurrippu). Commentators support Tolkāppiyar's list and they say that the eighth type 'tattam porula' as redundant.

Nānṉūlār did not distinguish the various status of itaiccol. Some kinds of itaiccol, namely, cāriyai, case marker, PNG suffixes, etc., are affixes; whereas those like comparative particles, euponic particles, suggestive particles are either prepositions or postpositions. In fact, amongst case markers and euphonic particles some are affixes while some are particles/postpositions. Hence, a contemporary grammar for Tamil should try to identify the morphological nature of the various itaiccol.

C.F. Hockett terms particles as uninflected stems. Nida says that the particles exhibit no formal categories and they are relatively shorter than other parts of speech.
T.P. Meenakshisundaran, (collected papers p. 235) says that some of these particles were originally independent words which have been reduced to the position of mere particles, therefore not being able to occur as independent words in contemporary Tamil. Independent words can themselves compose sentences whereas particles cannot form sentences by themselves. These guidelines could be used to categorise the itaiccol, morphologically.

Under the expletive markers, Nāṇṉūḷār gives many clitics. They are dependent entities which are not capable of independent occurrence as words. Pike says that clitics are semi-free words.

Nāṇṉūḷār gives the various contextual meanings of the clitics. Today, some of those meanings have either become modified or obsolete; some clitics have acquired additional new meanings. In Sutra 422, Nāṇṉūḷār says that the clitic, 'e', connotes six meanings.
The modern Tamil has given the clitic, e, more meanings than Tolkāppiyar and Nāṇṇūlār. According to Pon Kothandaraman, the clitic, e, has twenty one meanings in modern Tamil. He lists down these meanings along with numerous examples. Here are a couple of examples:

eg. 1) Paṭāiyē Naṭunkum

   - (the entire army will shiver)(exaggeration)

   2) Naaltōrum Irāntu Kural Paṭikkalāmē (coaxing)

      -(may be, you can read two verses daily)

In Sūtra 436, Nāṇṇūlār introduces two particles, i.e., oṭu and teyya; the particle, oṭu is still in use whereas ‘teyya’ is obsolete. Such is the case with particles, ‘antil’ and ‘aṅku’ in Sutra 437, where the former is obsolete while the latter is still in use.

There are many particles which are not used in modern Tamil but may be used in literature. They are those in Sūtras 438 (amma), 439 (ma), 440
(miyā) (ika), (maṭi), (aṭṭai), (ittai), (mala), (i), (yala) and 441 (ya), (ka), (pirakkā), (ārō), (pō), (matu), (ikum), (ciṇ), (kurai), and (orum).

An extensive study will reveal more facts about the functions of these particles in modern Tamil. The researcher has noted that some of these particles are still being used by our mass media and Tamil academicians.

4.5 Pataviyal

One distinct contribution made by Nannular is the Chapter on pataviyal (morphology). What the modern linguists call as morphology was dealt with by Sage Pavanaṇanti for Tamil in the 13th century.

Nannular includes his morphological analysis in the first division i.e. eluttatikaram. He discusses both about phonology and the morphological structure of words in the first section; the latter is discussed in the chapter, pataviyal, i.e. from sūtras 128-145.
Nānūlar divides 'patam' into two distinct types/categories. In Sūtra 128, he defines that if a single letter or a sequence of letters convey a meaning, then they will be known as words. He further divides patam as pahu patam, i.e., words which can be further divided into meaningful units, and pahāppatam which denotes indivisible words. Nānūlar explains that if pahāppatam is further divided it will become meaningless (sutra: 131). This explanation reminds us of a free morpheme. A free morpheme is the smallest independent meaningful unit. Nānūlar and his commentators have been greatly appreciated for the recognition and explanation of pahāppatam. While stating the various meaningful components of divisible words, Nannular mentions that pahāppatam functions as the base of pahupatam; when listing down the qualitative nouns which will function as the base for pahupatam, he gives the forms, cemmai (red/good), cirumai (smallness) etc. Though these forms are composed of the root and the suffix, mai, they are pahāppatam according to Nānūlar. This is because the roots, cem-, cir-, etc. do not have
independent occurrence; conversely, they are bound morphemes. Hence, they do not qualify to be words/free morphemes. Therefore, when Nannulār mentions pahappatam, he strictly means independent smallest meaningful morphemes.

Nevertheless, Nannulār poses a bit of controversy when he says that there are four kinds of pahappatam, namely, peyar (noun), vina(verb), ētai(particles/affixes), uri(word roots). Nannulār himself says that ēta and uri occur along with nouns and verbs; they do not have a completely independent occurrence. Probably some of the uriccol may have independent occurrence; uriccol such as klirtti (fame), uvappu (happiness), etc. occur as free nominal roots. As for ētaiccol, there are some forms like marra (other), en/enru (said thus) and a few other semi-independent words. Two of the ētaiccol, marraiyatu (the other) and anku(there) may be accepted to be independently occurring words.
However, Nāṇṉulār has correctly said that nouns and finite and non-finite Tamil verbs are the divisible words. However, word classes may need revision.

In sūtra 133, Pavananti mentions the six components of a divisible word and continues to elaborate on them from nūtpa 134 – 145. When he speaks about the components, it becomes clear that he was well aware that the three main components of a word are the root base (pakutī) + noun deriving/tense indicating elements (itainilai) and PNG and other suffixes (vikuthi), canti vikaaram (transformed canti) and cāriyai (flexional increment) are subsidiary components which aid word formation. Canti and cāriyai are discussed in separate chapters that follow pataviyal since the topic, canti, involves a lot of rules.

As for the three main components, Nāṇṉulār lists down the qualitative nouns and verbal roots which will form the base (pakutī) of a word; he also tells of how the original forms will be modified when combining with
other elements to form words. He lists down the PNG suffixes and some suffixes which indicates PNG as well as tense. Nannular also lists down tense markers and nominal derivative affixes that occur between roots and PNG suffixes.

Nannūlar had given four units as past tense markers i.e. ț rê in Sūtra 142. Are these the only past tense markers found in modern Tamil? Modern linguists give a negative answer. Beschi views that preterite (markers for țrappu) is a difficult aspect because there are a variety of preterites; hence classification of verbs according to past tense markers is difficult; there is scarcely a classification which does not have exceptional cases. He has done a lot of research on verb classification. Modern linguists including Ageistalingom and Pon. Kothandaraman support that the past tense markers have increased in number.

For the present tense markers, Nannūlar gives only three. i.e. țninru, kinru, kiru (sūtra 143). Modern linguists following Craul’s suggestions,
add one more marker to this category i.e. Kkiru. Aniru is not in current use. For the future tense we have two i.e. p and v but now 'pp' is added.

These are some of the modifications suggested, basing on modern linguists' observations, to strengthen some of the Nannūl Sūtra's. Nevertheless, many scholars believe more researches ought to be conducted to throw light on some new grammatical aspects found in contemporary Tamil.

4.6 New Arrivals

All languages may acquire new grammatical categories in the course of time. Probably the greater intelligence of human beings is responsible for this sort of development. No language is exception to this phenomenon.

Tamil Language, over the years, i.e. about 2000 years, had been going through considerable changes. This twentieth century, is characterised by
many modern developments; these developments require effective functioning of the corresponding languages. Tamil cannot be an exception, to this kind of requirement. Hence, modern Tamil has acquired new grammatical features. These features, highlighted by the modern scholars, are available to us through their research papers, essays and books.

Franz Boas (1858-1942) has proved how the peculiar interests of a culture, in our context the modern culture, could lead to specialization and expression of certain linguistic items. In other words, there is direct correspondence between language and culture which is conditioned by the morphological traits of the language.

The modern culture has been responsible for the emergence of new categories in Tamil. We shall take note of these new grammatical categories; as they are not found in Tolkāppiyam or NaṉṆūl, we call them as ‘new arrivals’ in Tamil Language.
According to Pon. Kothandaraman, S. Sakthivel and many scholars, some of the words, listed as uriccol and were performing the adverbial and/or adjectival functions, have become very uncommon in modern Tamil. Instead, we find steadfast appearance of adjectives and adverbs.

K. Thilagawathi ascertains that appellative adjectival participles (kurippu peyareccam) are acknowledged as adjectives and the appellative adverbial participles (kurippu vinaiyeccam) as adverbs in modern Tamil. The point here is that adjectives and adverbs were not recognised as separate grammatical categories in traditional grammar.

Pon. Kothandaraman says that though the introduction of the concept of adjectives and adverbs is due to the impact of the English Grammar, it becomes our duty to recognise the existence of these categories in Tamil, and give the due place to them.
An adjective modifies a noun or a pronoun by describing, identifying or qualifying the latter. An adjective usually precedes a noun or a pronoun which it modifies.

Pon. Kothandaraman says that adjectives are those which qualify a noun and which are neither relative participle (peyareceam) nor nouns. He further divides adjectives into two kinds. i.e. simple adjectives and derived adjectives.

The qualifying words such as nalla 'good', ketta 'bad', periya 'big' and ciriya 'small' form the category of simple adjective.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{e.g.} & \quad \text{nalla manitan} & \text{(good man)} \\
& \quad \text{ketta manitan} & \text{(evil man)} \\
& \quad \text{periya manacu} & \text{(good heart)} \\
& \quad \text{ciriya manacu} & \text{(ill heart)}
\end{align*}
\]
Derived adjectives are formed by adding ana to certain nouns denoting quality.

e.g. akāṇa - "beautiful"
    uyaramaṇa - "tall"
    akalamāṇa - "wide"

K. Paramasivam says that the relative participle is just one of the adjectives. He adds that in Tamil Language, the adjective precedes the noun; adjectives do not denote gender; we cannot combine two or more adjectives using the morpheme 'um'. In other languages, especially in English, we can combine the adjectives.

e.g. A good and delicious meal.

In Tamil, it will be written as, Nalla cuvaliyāṇa cāppatū (good and delicious food) but not as 'nallavuum cuvaliyumaana cāppatū'.

K. Paramasivam further adds that the term, adjective, will comprise of 'explicit relative participle', 'appellative relative participle', 'negative
relative participle’ and those derived by suffixing ‘āṇa’ to qualitative nouns.

In traditional grammar, the simple adjective i.e. Nalla, periya, etc. are called appellative relative participles; but, there is a problem in the so-called derived adjectives. Many linguists still argue the status of the suffixes āṇa, ulla, arra and illata, in examples like: alakāṇa, alakullā, alakarrā and alakkilītāta.

Many doubt that the forms āṇa, ulla, arra and illata are relative participles. K.Paramasivam (1983:194) opines that the terinilai peyareccam, such as paatiṇa and etirmarai peyareccam such as pāṭāta can be considered as syntactic derivatives whereas kurippu peyareccam such as nalla and the qualitative nouns in combination with the suffix -āṇa can be considered as morphologically derived adjectives.
Asher, Lehman, and Kothenaraman consider the adjectives as a part of speech in Tamil Language but there are other linguists who do not feel the same way. These linguists feel that it is difficult to illustrate the functional classification of Tamil adjectives because Tamil adjectives can only be explained in a syntactical context.

An adjective is a word that syntactically is in attributive construction with a noun which it precedes but does not agree with the noun in gender or number, says M.B. Emeneau (Kolami. A. Dravidian Language, p.31).

The recent suggestions about derivative adjectives demand more detailed analysis as they are capable of giving rise to some controversies. S. Saktivel and S. Rajendran suggest various ways in which derivative adjective can be obtained. These proposals will be useful inputs for a modern Tamil Grammar as they give us an insight into the various structural patterns of adjectives.
First, noun and qualitative noun will yield an adjective.

e.g. noun + qualitative noun > adjective

rattam + civappu > rathacivappu (colour)

kili + paccai > kilippacai (colour)

Secondly, qualitative noun + qualitative noun > adjective

e.g. 1) Kurutṭu + ūmai > Kurutṭu ūmai

2) Karumai + nilam > Karunilam

In this way, many examples can be found.

These are some of the new features collected from the writings of contemporary scholars and the language used in mass media.