Structural and Functional Significance of Participles and Finite Verb Forms in Modern Tamil for Language Teaching-Learning Method

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Abstract

This paper discusses the structural and functional significance of participles and verb forms in Modern Tamil. The focus of this paper is on identifying the structural and semantic aspects of participles and finite verb forms to help teach and learn Tamil. Examples from current usage are provided along with an introduction to participles in traditional Tamil grammars. Occurrence of participles and finite verbs in various forms are presented and discussed.

Key words: Participles, finite verb forms, modern Tamil, use of participles and finite verb forms in teaching and modern Tamil

Participles in Tamil – an Introduction

Participles are non-infinite verb forms in Tamil and Tamil grammars refer them as eccaṅkaḷ (Tolkāppiyam, 1994). Participles are in immediate constituent relationship with the following finite verb in a phrase or sentence except the relative / adjective participle form which has IC relationship with the following noun. Participle expects a finite verb or noun to terminate the sentence in which it occurs. However, in languages like English a relative pronoun (forms like *which, that, who, where, etc.*) connects the noun and the following participle form as in the *song that she sang, the student who answered the questions, etc.* Participles have both affirmative and negative distinctions in their occurrences. Moreover, Tamil relative participle forms can take gender-number suffixes (Karunakaran, 1971) as well, and all such forms are tested as participial nouns/conjugated nouns – affirmative or negative. It is also possible to add some of the particles denoting place, time, manner, etc. (*poḻutu, uṭaṉē, paṭi, etc.*) to the relative

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forms and expand them. All such forms are termed as temporal participle 1, temporal participle 2, place participle, manner participle, etc.

Some of the Tamil participles can occur in reduplicated forms as well. All such forms so formed function as verbal participle only (like *collaccolla, naṭantunaṭantu, ōṭiōṭi ….*) and thus get syntactico semantic significance in the sentence / discourse structure of the Tamil language. For example,

anta nikaḻccikkāka nam talaivar ōṭi ōṭi uḻaittār

'our leader really worked very hard for that program/function'

There are particles like *–um, -ē, -tāṉ, -varai (yilum), -varai (kkum), etc.* which occur with participles forms in sentences and discourses.

i) *appā colliyum tampi kātu koṭuttuk kēṭkavillai.*

'eventhough father advised my little brother, he did not listen/care to his advice'

ii) *nīyāvatu viruntukku nērru vantiruntāl naṉrāka iruntirukkumē*

'it would have been nice at least you have attended the dinner yesterday'

iii) *eṉṉōṭu vantē tiruvēṉ eṉru kamala aṭam piṭikkiṟāḷ*

'Kamala is very adamant that she would also accompany me'

iv) *nāṉ aṟinta varaiyil antak kaṭṭuraiyil viḷakkam cariyāka amaintuḷḷatu.*

'as far as I knew, the description given in that essay was quite alright'

Objectives of the Study

Words are organized into phrases and clauses to make sentences by a set of rules and principles in a language. A simple sentence contains only a single clause, while a compound sentence, or a complex sentence contains at least two clauses. The most natural sentence structure is the simple sentence and it is the first type which children learn to speak, and it remains by far the most common sentence in the spoken language of people of all ages. Simple sentences can be very effective for gaining a reader's or listener's attention. However, in this

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paper the use of participles in complex sentences and some other verbal constructions are also exposed analytically and critically.

As this is a descriptive linguistic study of modern Tamil structure and use, the following are set as the main objectives:

    i. To identify and formalize the morphological description of all types of participles found in the modern Tamil.

    ii. To explain the syntactic function and the significance of the participle forms in Tamil complex sentence formation

    iii. To identify and explain the role of participles in the formation of complex verbal categories like 'modals' and 'aspects'.

    iv. To explain the process of expansion of participle forms by the addition of certain particles in Tamil.

    v. To explain the syntactic-semantic significance and value of participle constructions in Tamil discourse.

    vi. To explain the formation of finite verb forms.

Scope of This Study

    i. It is purely a descriptive study with reference to the modern written Tamil as practiced in Malaysia-Singapore.

    ii. However, due importance is given to all those distinctive participle constructions found in Malaysia-Singapore spoken Tamil varieties.

    iii. The study tries to focus on the use of participles in some of the specific social contexts.

Research Methodology

Research methodology includes three sub-sections, namely:

    i. Data collection and data used for this study.

    ii. Research Methods applied in the analysis.

    iii. The interpretations made and formalization of the descriptive analysis.

Data for This Study

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The relevant and adequate data for this study were collected from newspapers, text books, journals etc. representing the print media and also from radio and television programs representing the audio-visual media. Researcher has made use of the observation method also in order to gather information pertaining to language use in specific socio-cultural contexts. All types of collected data were processed and classified in such a way they become fit for the descriptive and structural linguistic analysis aimed at.

Research Methods Used for the Analysis

The following descriptive and structural linguistic methods are chosen for the analysis:

i. Methods of morphological and syntactic descriptions.
ii. Analysis of sentence structure and beyond using the principles of discourse analysis.
iii. Coherence and cohesion of meaning and linguistic forms in discourse and their distribution

The Interpretations Made and Formalization of the Descriptive Analysis

In the process of formalization of analysis due importance has to be given to the presentation of the descriptive study as follows:

i. Presentation of the morphological analysis
ii. The role of the participles and finite verbs in phrases.
iii. Significance of the participles in sentence structure and
iv. Syntactico-semantic correlation found in the discourse structure from the points of view of 'Coherence' and 'Cohesion'.

MWT – Morphological Description

Verb forms: Participles

1. Verbal participle/ Past participle

1.1 Affirmative

Structure: VB + Past ten. Suf. + VP suf.

paṭi-tt-u   *> paṭittu*   *'having read / studied'*

ōṭu - iṉ-Ø   > *ōṭi*   'having run'

1.2 Negative[*]

Structure: VB + (L.M.) + neg. suf. + VP suf.

paṭi-kk-ā-mal   > *paṭikkāmal*   'without reading/ studying'

ōṭu-ā-mal   > *ōṭāmal*   'without running'

2. Conditional Participle

2.1 Affirmative

Structure : VB + (past ten. Suf.) + cond. Suf.

eṭu – tt – āl   > *eṭuttāl*   'if (one) takes'

āṭu - iṉ - āl   > *āṭiṉāl*   'if (one) dances'

var-in   > *varin*   'if (one) comes'

va- nt- āl   > *vantāl*   'if (one) comes'

2.2 Negative

Structure: VB + (L.M) + neg. suf. + cond. Suf.

eṭu – kk- ā- viṭṭāl > *eṭukkāviṭṭāl*   'if (one) doesn't take'

āṭu – ā - viṭṭāl   > *āṭāviṭṭāl*   'if (one) doesn't dance'

kēḷ - k- ā - viṭṭāl   > *kēṭkāviṭṭāl*   'if (one) doesn't ask'

3. Infinitive

Structure: VB + (L.M) + inf. suf.

naṭa – kk- a   > *naṭakka*   'to walk'

cey – a   > *ceyya*   'to do''

nil –k – a   > *niṟka*   'to stand'

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[*]L.M. denotes link morpheme and it is obligatory after the strong and middle verbs in Tamil. (Karunakaran, 2000)

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4. Relative Participle / Adjective Participle

4.1 Affirmative

Structure: VB + ten. Suf. + RP suf.

eṭu – tt – a	*> eṭuṭṭa*	*'took' (adj.p.)*
col - kiṟ - a	*> colkiṟa*	*'saying' (adj. p.)*
ōṭu – um – Ø	*> ōṭum*	*"will run' (adj. p.)*

4.2 Negative

Structure : VB + (L.M) + neg. suf. + RP suf.

ōṭu – āt –a	*> ōṭāta*	*'not running' (adj.)*
naṭa – kk – āt – a	*> naṭakkāta*	*'not walking' (adj.)*

5. Temporal Participles

5.1 Temporal Participle 1

5.1.1 Affirmative

Structure : RPF aff. + *poḻutu/pōtu*

paṭitta - poḻutu/pōtu	*'while/when one read'*
colkiṟa-poḻutu/pōtu	*'while/when one saying'*
collum- poḻutu/pōtu	*'while/one will tell'*

5.1.2 Negative

Structure: RPF neg. + *pōḻutu/pōtu*

paṭikkāta - poḻutu/pōtu	*'while/when one not reading'*
cāppiṭāta - poḻutu/pōtu	*'while/when one not eating'*

5.2 Temporal Participle 2[†]

[†]This is only with reference to the affirmative type of constructions. There is no negative counterpart for this.

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5.2.1 Affirmative

Structure : RPF aff. + *uṭaṉē / tum*

vanta - uṭaṉē/ tum   'as soon as one came'

ōṭaṉē - uṭaṉē / tum   'as soon as one ran'

'uṭaṉē/ tum' occur in free variation after thr RP forms.

e.g. *appā ̄vīṭṭukku vanta uṭaṉē ēṭāvatu paṭippār* *'as soon as father comes home he*

used to read something. It freely varies with the following sentence:

appā ̄vīṭṭukku vantatum ētāvatu paṭippāār'.

Formation of Complex Verb Forms and the Role of Particles

Participle forms occur as base forms for the formation of complex verb forms known as 'modals and aspects'. There are seventeen such form's, each having a particular meaning and function in modern Tamil.

1. Formation of Modals

Structure: Inf. MV + Aux. Verb +

There are ten (10) types of modal forms as explained below:

    i. Obligatory : Inf. MV + *vēṇṭum*

        colla - vēṇṭum   *'one has to tell'*

        paṭikka - vēṇṭum   *'one has to read'*

    ii. Need not: Inf. MV + *vēṇṭām*

        ōṭa - vēṇṭām   *'one need not run'*

        eṭukka - vēṇṭām   *'one need not take'*

    iii. Can (possibility) : Inf. MV + *muṭiyum*

        colla - muṭiyum   *'one can tell'*

        kuṭikka - muṭiyum   *'one can drink'*

    iv. Cannot : Inf. MV + *muṭiyātu*

        cāppiṭa - muṭiyātu   *'one cannot eat'*

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<div style="text-align: center">

aṭikka - muṭiyātu   *'one cannot hit'*

</div>

v. Should not (prohibitive) : Inf. MV + *kūṭātu*

      eṭukka - kūṭātu   *'one should not take'*

      vara - kūṭātu   *'one should not come'*

vi. Probability : Inf. MV + *kūṭum*

      pāṭa - kūṭum   *'one might sing'*

      naṭakka - kūṭum   *'one might walk'*

vii. Causative : Inf. MV + *vai* + PNG suf.

      cāppiṭa - vaittēṉ   *'I caused someone to eat'*

      naṭakka – vai   *'cause someone to walk (imp.)'*

viii. Past Negative: Inf. MV + *Illai*

      paṭikka – illai   *'(one) did not/does not study'*

ix.   Future negative: Inf. MV + *-māṭṭ* + PGN suf.

      koṭukka-māṭṭ-ēṉ   *'I will not give'*

x.   [‡]Progressive (Action going to take place): Inf. MV + *-pō* +PGN suf.

      colla - pōkiṟāṉ   *'he is going to tell something'*

      aṭikka-pōkiṟārkaḷ   *'they are going to hit'*

2. Formation of Aspectual Verb Forms

Structure: VP aff. MV + aux. verb +

i. Perfective: VP aff. MV + iru+

    vantu - irukkiṟēṉ   *'I have come'*

    vantu - iruntēṉ   *'I had come'*

    vantu - iruppēṉ   *'I would have come'*

So, there are forms denoting perfective meaning in all the three tenses.

ii. Definitive: VP Aff. MV + viṭu + (PNG Suf.)

[‡]i) Auxiliary verb forms are added with or without person-number-gender markers.

ii) Past negative form denotes present negative also.

paṭittu - viṭṭēṉ	*'I read something (def.)'*
koṭuttu - viṭuvāṉ	*'He will give (def.)'*

iii. Completive : VP aff. MV + *āyiṟṟu*

cāppiṭṭu - āyiṟṟu	*'one has eaten (comp.)'*
colli - āyiṟṟu	*'one has said something (comp.)'*

iv. Reflexive: VP aff. MV + *koḷ* + (PNG suf.)

paṭittu - koḷ	*'you read for / by yourself' (imp.)*
ōṭi-koḷ-v-āṉ >	
ōṭikkoḷ vāṉ	*'he will run for/by himself'*

v. Continuative/ Durative: VP aff. MV + *koṇṭiru* +

vantu-koṇṭirukkiṟārkaḷ	*'They are coming' (now.)*
vantu-koṇṭiruṇṭārkaḷ	*'They are coming'*
vantu- koṇṭiruppārkaḷ	*'They will be coming'*

vi. Trial (try to do….): VP aff. MV + *pār* + (PNG suf.)

cāppiṭṭu - pārttēṉ	*'I tried to taste something'*
kēṭṭu-pārkkiṟōm	*'We will try to ask'*

vii. Contemptuous / Derogatory : VP aff. MV + tolai + (PNG suf.)

eppaṭiyō pōyttolai	*'You go and get lost' (imp.)*
vantu tolai	*'You (sg.) also come and join us.*
	(in a derogatory sense)'

Functional Significance and Use of Participles in Tamil

Sometimes Participles occur in reduplicated utterances as given below. Infinitive form and the verbal participle affirmative forms have reduplicated utterances and thereby they acquire contextual meanings such as intensity of an action, in course of time, as time goes on, repeatedly, continuously, frequently, etc.

1. **Reduplication of Infinitive Forms**

   Structure: Inf-1 + Inf. -1 > Reduplicated Inf.

   i. *pōkap pōka ellām cariyākiviṭum eṉṟu nampukiṟēṉ*

   'I hope that everything will become alright in due course / in course of time'

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ii.   *nān collaccolla tampi kataiyai eḻuti muṭittān*

   'younger brother completed writing of the story as I went on narrating it (continuously) to him'

2. **Reduplication of Verbal Participle (Affirmative) Forms**

   Structure: VP Aff. 1 + VP Aff. 1 > Reduplicated VP

   i) *ōṭi ōṭi uaittāl vāḷkkaiyil uyarvu peṟalām*

      'if one works really hard one can come up in life'

   Ii) *ñiṅkaḷ ceyta utaviyaippaṟṟi colliccolli makiḻntārkaḷ*

      'They are praising you a lot for the help that you have done to them'

   iii) *avariṭam kēṭṭukkēṭṭu maṉam calittuviṭṭatu*

      'I am really fed up very much because of my repeated request to him'

Functional Significance of Participles Occurring with Particles in Discourse

   Particles both free and bound occur with nouns, verbs, adverbs and among themselves (one particle occurring with another or one after another) in Tamil discourse depending upon the contextual/ semantic significance.

   i) *pattu maṇi varai*   *till ten o'clock'*

   ii) *tampiyum*   *'younger brother also'*

   iii) *vantālum*   *'even if one comes'*

   iv) *varuvāṉē*   *he will come (def.)*

   v) *naṉṟākavē iruntatu*   *'yes, it was really good' etc.*

   In Tamil, particles occur after the participle forms also and all such forms exhibit their functional importance in grammatical constructions.

Participle Forms	PF with Particles
VP: *colli*	*nāṉ colliyum kēṭkavillai* *'even though I advised him, he did not listen to me'*

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pōy	*aṅkē pōyum puṇṇiyam illai* *'There is no use even if you visit that place'*
niṟaivēṟṟi	*niṟaivēṟṟiyē tiruvōm* *'We will definitely complete the project undertaken by us'*
Conditional: *kēṭṭāl* *varāviṭṭāl*	*nāṉ kēṭṭālum avar taramāṭṭār* *'even if request him, he will not give'* *ñiṅkaḷ vantālum varāviṭṭālum avar niccayam varuvār* *'whether you come or not he (hon.) will definitely come'*
Infinitive: *colla*	*tampi antac ceytiyai ippolutu collavāvatu ceytānē* *'younger brother at least informed us the matter now…. oh! That was fine'*
RP: *coṉṉa, vantapōlutu*	*āciriyar coṉṉapaṭiyētāṉ nāṉ antak kaṭṭurai el̤ utiṉēṉ.* *'I wrote that essay exactly the same way as the teacher explained'* *nīṅkaḷ vantapol̤ututān nāṉ cāppiṭṭu muṭittēṉ* *'I just finished eating when you came in'*

Formation of Complex Verb- Sentences in Tamil - Role of Participles

      All those participles formed as explained in the section on morphological description participate in the formation of complex sentences of different types in Tamil. That is, when two or more simple sentences are embedded into one another, those finite verb forms in the embedded sentences get transformed into participle forms. This is because Tamil sentences can have only one finite verb in a sentence and all other actions performed by the subject have to be transformed into participles depending upon the syntactic-semantic agreement / dependence. So, there are a set of T-rules which explain the changes due to addition, deletion, replacement or

substitution etc. There are five kinds of participles with affirmative and negative distinction participate in the transformational process found in the derivation of complex sentences (as matrix and constituent sentences).

1. **Derivation of Infinitive Constructions (sentences)**

   i)   *tampi maruntu vāṅkināṉ* [S S]

       'younger brother bought medicine'

   ii) *tampi kaṭaikkup pōṉāṉ* [M S]

       'younger brother went to the store'

The syntactic-semantic significance in the derivation of the complex sentence, *tampi maruntu vāṅka kaṭaikkup pōṉāṉ* *'younger brother went to the store to buy medicine'* is the transformation namely vāṅkināṉ > vāṅka. The T-rule is FV becoming infinitive form of the verb and the meaning of infinitive form is purposive. As the two actions were performed by the same subject, the subject of the SS is deleted in order to get the required complex sentence as stated above.

2. **Derivation of Verbal Participle Constructions (Sentences)**

   i)   *nāṉ oru puttakam koṭuppēṉ* [M S]

       'I will give a book'

   ii) *nāṉ nāḷaikku uṉ aṟaikku varuvēṉ* [S S]

       'I will come to your room tomorrow'

By applying the T- rules: (1) FV – SS > VP – SS

           (2) Subj. – SS>Ø (deleted)

The complex sentence derived is: *nāṉ nāḷaikku uṉ aṟaikku vantu oru puttakam koṭuppēṉ*

    'I will come to your room tomorrow and give you a book'

This derivation shows the consecutive meaning (action that has taken place)

3. **Derivation of Conditional Participle Construction (Sentences)**

   i) *tampi paṇam kēṭpāṉ* [S S]

       'younger brother will ask for money'

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ii) *appā paṇam koṭuppār [M S]*

    'father will him money'

The complex sentence,

    tampi kēṭṭāl appā paṇam koṭuppār

    'if younger brother requests father will give money to him'

Is derived by applying the following T-rules:

    i)   FV – SS > Cond. Part. – SS (kēṭpāṉ becomes kēṭṭāl)

    ii)   Obj. – SS > Ø (paṇam is deleted)

    iii)   Subject – MS is shifted

4. Derivation of Relative Participle Constructions (Sentences)

The complex sentence, *āciriyar coṉṉa viṇakkam mikavum cariyāṉatu*

'the description the teacher gave was quite correct' is derived from the following sentences namely,

    i)   *āciriyar viṇakkam coṉṉār [S S]*

          'the teacher gave the description'

    ii) *anta viṇakkam mikavum cariyāṉatu [M S]*

          'that description was quite correct'

by applying the following T- rules,

    a) FV – SS > RP – SS (*coṉṉār > coṉṉa*)

    b) Obj. – SS > Ø (*viṇakkam* is deleted)

    c) Dem. Adj. > Ø (*anta* is deleted)

5. Derivation of Temporal Participle Constructions (Sentences)

The two simple *sentences rāmaṉ aṅkē pōnār ' Raman went there' [S S] and kaṇṇaṉ appoḻutu aṅkē iruntār ' Kannan was there at that time' [M S]* are embedded into one another to derive the complex sentence,

    rāmaṉ pōṉapoḻutu kaṇṇaṉ aṅkē iruntār

    'Kannan was there when Raman went'.

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In the derivation of this sentence the following T- rules are applied:

T – rules: i) FV – SS > RP aff. – SS (*pōnār > pōna*)

ii) RP + *appoḻutu* > RP *poḻutu (pōṉa + appoḻutu > pōṉapoḻutu*)

iii) ADV place – SS > Ø (*aṅkē* is deleted)

Formation of Participial and Verbal Noun Forms

Both these sub-categories are formed by the addition of PNG suffixes to the relative participle forms – affirmative and negative. Tamil traditional grammars discuss such forms under *viṉaiyālaṇaiyum peyar* (participial noun / conjugated noun) and *toḻirpeyar* (verbal noun). The first category of noun forms are formed by adding all the PNG markers to the RP forms whereas the second category of noun forms by adding suffixes such as – *al, -tal, or PNG suffix -(a)tu.*

1. Formation of Participial Noun Forms

Structure : RP form – Aff / Neg. + PNG suff.

naṭantavaṉ	*'he who walked',*
naṭantavaḷ	*'she who walked',*
naṭantavarkaḷ	*'they (human) who walked',*
naṭantavar	*'he/she (hon.) who walked',*
naṭantatu	*'that which walked',*
naṭantavai	*'those which walked'*
naṭakkātavaṉ	*'he who did not walk',*
naṭakkātavaḷ	*'she who did not walk' etc.*

2. Formation of Verbal Noun Forms (Refers only to the action performed)

Structure 1: VB + Verbal Noun suf. *(-al, - tal, etc.)*

Structure 2: RP Form + PNG suf. *(-tu)*

Structure 1: -al (*cey – al > ceyal 'action'* etc.

-tal (*pāṭu – tal > pāṭutal 'act of singing'* etc.

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Structure 2: Suffix – (a)tu

Affirmative: vanta+tu > vantatu 'that which came/the act of coming'

po: -came-atu > po: natu 'the act of going'

Occurrences of Distinctive Use of Particles

There are certain particles like - pōṭu, used in some of the Tamil spoken varieties (dialects) of Tamilnadu (India), Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and they all are considered as distinctive usages. The following are some of the variations attested.

1. *-pōṭu* occurring as an auxiliary verb after the VP aff. MV to denote the meaning definiteness (definitive type)

2. *-kiṉu, -ṇṭu, -kiṭṭu, -ṭṭu, -nu* occurring as alternants of the auxiliary form *(--koṇṭu)* representing the continuative / durative meaning.

3. *-kayyōṭa* occurring as a particle denoting (as soon as….) after the RPF aff.

4. *–acce* occurring as a particle after the RP form to denote (when/while an action performed).

5. *–iyalum / -iyalātu* occurring with the Inf. MV. to denote can/cannot. (*vara – iyalum* in the Jaffna dialect)

6. *–kō, -ki-, -ku-, -kiṭ-, -kun-* occurring as variants of *-koṭ (-kō.)* to denote the reflexive meaning.

7. *–vāci* which occurs after the RP form affirmative to denote the meaning because of one's …… (*coṉṉāvāci 'because of one's saying'*).

Finite Verb Forms in Modern Tamil

Finite verb forms in modern Tamil has the morphological structure, <u>VB + Ten. Suf. + PNG Suffix</u>, except in the formation of Future non-human sg. /pl. finite form (as in <u>ōṭum</u> 'will run-it/ They (n.hum')'.

Modern Tamil has at least 5 types of finite verb forms:

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i) Imperative Verb form

ii) FV with tense suffixes and PNG suffixes

iii) Permissive Verb Forms

iv) Hortative Verb Forms

v) Optative Verb Forms and

vi) Impersonal Verb Forms.

Of these forms only the second type occurs with tense suffixes. All those FV forms are commonly used in Modern Tamil and their occurence is frequent also. The FV forms show different kinds of distribution and exhibit distinct syntactico semantic relationship /agreement (with subject).

1. **Imperative Form (FV 1)**

There are affirmative and negative forms both in singular and plural. In addition, there is a form to denote the Intermediate herorific singular[§].

e.g.   *nī vā*   *'you (sg.) come'*

nīṅkaḷ vāruṅkaḷ/ va:ṅkaḷ   *'you (pl.) come'*

nīr vārum   *'you (I. hon. sg.) come'*

2. **FV with tense and PGN suffixes**

VB + Ten. Suf. + PGN Suffix

e.g.   *paṭi – tt – e:n > paṭittēn*   *'read-I'*

ōṭu - kiṟ - a:n   > ōṭukiṟān   *'runs-he'*

naṭa – pp - āḷ > naṭappāḷ   *'will run-she'*

ōṭu – Ø – um   > ōṭum   *'will run-it'*

3. Permissive Verb Forms

[§]*nī, nīṅkaḷ, nir* show agreement, but with different suffixes *-uṅkaḷ, -ṅkaḷ* and unmarked in singular.

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VB + (LM) + Perm. Suf.

e.g. *eḻutu – alām   > eḻutalām   'one may write'*

paṭi – kk – alām > paṭikkalām   'one may read'

nil – k – alām   > niṟkalām   '(one) may stand up'

Permissive FV can have any subject (with all the three persons, and also can denote the meaning '(one) can do……….'

4. Hortative Verb Forms

VB + (LM) + Hort. Suf.

e.g. *āṭu - aṭṭum   > āṭaṭṭum   'let (one) play/dance'*

col - aṭṭum   > collaṭṭum   'let (one) tell'

naṭa – kk- aṭṭum > naṭakkaṭṭum   'let (one) walk'

5. Optative Verb Forms

VB + Opt. Suf.

This is a restricted usage in the sense it can go with very few verb bases as in:

avar nācamāka pōka   'let him perish'

talaivar vāḻka   'let the leader live long'

nī nallā irukka…..   'you! live long!'

However, in the context of performing prayer to God a form pōṟṟi (praise thy lord) is added.

oppilā āṇṭavarē, pōṟṟi………pōṟṟi !

'Thy Lord, we offer our prayers to you'

6. Impersonal Verb Forms

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There is a set of forms with affirmative vs. negative difference used as verb forms which occur as finite verbs. These forms show agreement with the dative case subject forms (mostly) and instrumental case subject form in one particular occurrence. It is an interesting feature in the occurrence of subject – predicate agreement.

Forms	Affirmative	Negative
	1) vēṇṭum 'want'	vēṇṭām 'don't want'
	2) teriyum 'know'	teriyātu 'don't know'
	3) piṭikkum 'like'	piṭikkātu 'don't like'
	4) pōtum 'enough'	pōtātu 'not enough'
	5) puriyum 'understand'	puriyātu 'cannot/don't understand'
	6) muṭiyum 'can'	muṭiyātu 'cannot'

Illustrations

    1) _enakkut teriyum_ 'I know'   ↔   _enakkut teriyātu_ 'I don't know'

    2) _ennāl muṭiyum_ 'I can'   ↔   _ennāl muṭiyātu_ 'I cannot'

However, permissive form can have only third person subject such as

    avar paṭikkaṭṭum   'let him read'

but not _nī paṭikkaṭṭum or nān paṭikkaṭṭum._

So, the differences found in the formation, subject predicate agreement and sociocultural contexts do play a significant syntactico semantic role in Tamil sentence structure which need to be explicitly made clear.

Conclusion

The present study has brought out the importance of some of the Tamil verb categories at the morphological and syntactical levels. It has focused on the contextual usages in Tamil

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discourse and brought out the use of participles and finite verb forms as well as particles occurring with nouns and verbs. This kind of classification and syntactic-semantic explanation are quite relevant for the language learners and users in order to identify the exact functional importance and values of grammatical structures in the communicative language- both in teaching and learning.

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