7.1 Consolidated Conclusion

In this thesis an attempt has been made to study the properties of case assignment in Tamil under GB theory. Chomsky (1981; p170) in his GB theory proposes the following fundamental properties of case assignment for all world languages:

(i) NP is nominative if governed by AGR,
(ii) NP is objective if governed by V with the subcategorisation feature: [NP-] (i.e. transitive),
(iii) NP is oblique if governed by P,
(iv) NP is genitive in (NP-X') and
(v) NP is inherently case-marked as determined by properties of its (-N) governor.

An attempt has been made in this study to analyse the validity of the above case assignment properties for Tamil language. Most of the above said properties are found to suit very well for Tamil language. The findings and the proposals of this study have a significant positive consequence for GB theory, because a common criticism (at least in the informal circle) levelled against it is that its conclusions are mainly on languages such as English and
these conclusions face difficulty when applied to the complicated data (such as those drawn from Tamil and other languages). Our study has shown, however, that it is possible to provide a relatively straightforward account of such complicated data in GB theoretical terms and without violating the fundamental principles of GB. The main findings of the study are given briefly below:

(1) Each and every functional head is a case assigner in Tamil.

(2) Nominative case is assigned by any one of the following functional heads (F) according to the sentences (1) TENSE, (2) AGR, (3) PARTICIPLE, (4) COMP, (5) NEG and (6) MODAL.

(3) Objective case is assigned by the verb.

(4) Dative case is assigned inherently (based on certain \(\emptyset\)-roles)

(5) Genitive case is assigned by POSS element present after the first noun.

(6) Postpositions are different from case markers. Case markers will not assign case, because the case markers are particles only. In adjuncts, the postpositions assign case to their argument.

(7) Empty category \(\text{pro}\) is present in Tamil. The content of \(\text{pro}\) is easily identified by AGR features and AGR will assign nominative case to \(\text{pro}\).
7.2 Future Prospects

The present study has elaborately dealt with the case parameters (i.e., case assignment parameters in Tamil. Other parameters are also present in Tamil language. They are (1) word order, (2) head direction, (3) $\emptyset$-assignment, (4) pro, (5) Avoid R-expression, (6) Bounding nodes, (7) anaphor, (8) relative clause, (9) passive movement, (10) Ergative, (11) Causative, (12) Topicalization, etc.

In future, attempts may be made by scholars to work elaborately in these areas and construct a core grammar of Tamil. However, Chomsky (1996) in his talk on Chapter IV of the minimalist programme in CIEFL, India questioned the very necessity of case assignment in GB theory (1981) and case checking in minimalist program (1992). This GB theory and minimalist program (1992) change drastically. However, for Chomsky (1988) the concept of parameters is applicable only to the lexicon and not to the computational system. So, this type of study will be useful to identify the lexical properties of particular languages.