Conclusion

The details of the multifaceted conclusion, drawn in response to the objectives outlined for this study “Assessment in Language Learning with reference to Syntactic Aspects (A Pragmatic Approach)”, are given below.

1. **Definitions and Demarcations**: An in-depth analysis of the syntactic aspects (phrase, clause, sentence) of language, was undertaken on the basis of the views of various scholars on historical perspectives (ref. Chapter-1) and the details of their properties / characteristics, were listed out in terms of their structure and nature. The inferences, consolidated views and concluding remarks on each of the syntactic components are provided. This has paved a way for initiating further study on these aspects in the context of teaching, learning, and evaluation. This fulfils the Sl.No.1 of the objectives listed in the Introductory part. This fulfils the Sl.No.1 of the objectives listed in the introductory part.

2. **Problems encountered by L₂ Learners**: Subsequently, the study was focussed on identifying the problems being encountered by the learners of Tamil as L₂ in the actual classroom situation at the Sothern Regional Language Centre, Mysore; later, at the Pondicherry Institute of Linguistic and Culture; International Institute of Tamil Studies Chennai; then, the focus was extended to the problems being faced by the learners of Tamil as L₂ or L₃ from the University of Malaysia too. The problems so identified with reference to each of the 3 syntactic components (i.e., phrase, clause, and sentence) are presented under different categories.

   The analysis of these problems in comparison with the teaching materials and syllabus document, was taken up under certain specified
parameters. As a result, a big gap was noticed between what was intended by the documents, and what could actually be observed from the learners after their learning the course. The nature of gap noticed was found to be reasonably high; the crux of the problem was, neither the details of language given as input nor the details of the language obtained as output (of learning) could be quantified. This has contributed for various interpretations and as a result, the gap emerges with a lot of differences in the content inputs as well as outputs, resulting in facing a series of problems. Obviously, this has given a scope for going into the details of problems, causal factors, and their association with the language dimensions. Such problems have been analysed and classified under certain specific categories. This takes care of the requirement at Sl.No.2 of the objectives listed in the Introductory part.

3. **Dimensions associated with Syntactic Aspects**: The need for going into the above mentioned details became apparent when an analysis was taken up on the concept of evaluation both in general, and as applicable to the area of education, particularly in language education. The primary requirement i.e., the pre-requisite of evaluation, is the evaluability of the object taken up for evaluation; it should necessarily be definable and quantifiable. This basic requirement, however, is something very difficult to meet, in these language courses, as such. In view of this, the above details were worked out, and classified under a broad category of five dimensions in a definable and quantifiable manner, based on certain empirical evidences, available as outcome of certain contemporary researches.

The details obtained as a combination of the factors of syntactic part of language (phrase, clause, sentence) and the dimensions (form, boundary, structure, function, meaning) associated with them, were considered as a list
of problem contributing factors. The details of the number of factors so obtained under different categories, are given below.

1. Form: phrase-36; clause-16; sentence -16
   total of 68 learning points (ref.pp.70-76/ante)

2. Boundary: phrase-11; clause-12; sentence -11
   total of 34 learning points (ref.pp.76-81/ante)

3. Structure: phrase-43; clause-18; sentence -12
   total of 73 learning points (ref.pp.81-89/ante)

4. Function: phrase-24; clause-8; sentence -16
   total of 48 learning points (ref.pp.89-94/ante)

6. Meaning: phrase-21; clause-15; sentence -15
   total of 51 learning points (ref.pp.94-105/ante)

4. Assessment Process Adopted: For the purpose of developing tools for assessment, an appropriate mechanism of sampling out the content inputs, was adopted. The tool here, refers to the questionnaires (both for written and oral responses) with a variety of item types each with a number of variants with 75 questions covering 94 problems (along with rationale) were also adopted as shown in the tally table (ref.chapter-5/ante). They were designed in such a way that the responses provided by the learners would become easily quantifiable. The principles, and other parameters required for item writing, were strictly adhered to. The clarity and adoptability were also ensured through a pilot study. This fulfils the Sl.no. 4 of the objectives.

5. Mechanism Suggested for Quantifying Learning: Based on the above, a viable mechanism viz., list of learning points, was proposed by incorporating syntactic components, dimensional factors, and the operating contexts. They were later reviewed and analysed, for their compatibility and
viability in the context of teaching, learning, and assessment by adopting a 4 point criteria viz., (i) Self Introspection, (ii) Quality of Tool used, (iii) Impact on the learners, and (iv) Opinion of the Teachers / Researchers of L2 (Ref. Chapter-5)

Based on this analysis, the list was altered with the following changes:

The list proposed under form with reference to all the 3 syntactic components originally consisted 68 learning points (phrase-36, clause-16, and sentence-16); this has now become 82 points instead of 68. The additional items are given below:

| Phrase | Noun phrase plural form | e.g., ஆவை தொன்நை மராண்கலா ?
|        |                         | avai tennai maranikalaa ?
|        | Noun phrase case form   | e.g., ஆன்டா மரடை வெத்து.
|        | anta marattai veṭṭu.
|        | Noun phrase infinitive form | e.g., ஆவன் இந்து பாதிக் கண்டவன்.
|        | avan inkku paṭikka vantavan.
| Verb phrase plural form | e.g., ஆவர்கள் வானைகள்.
|                      | avarkal vantaarkal.
| Verb phrase infinitive form | e.g., நியான பாத்தோய்க் பாதிக் வெண்டும்.
|                      | nii anta paṭattaiṭ paṭikka veṇṭum
| Post positional nominal form | e.g., வெண்டும் முளம் பிரப்பிற்பிறந்ததினை
|                          | venoli muulam olipparappinaarkal
| Post positional RP form | e.g., ராமன் வானைப் பிரார்த்தல், மாறு வெண்டும்.
|                        | raaman vantap pinnaal varavum

Post positional verbal noun form | e.g., காப்பிதொழிக்கக் கணித் பாத்தோக் கண்டது
|                                | caappīṭuvait tavira unakkku enna teriyum
Clause

Conditional negative form e.g., பார் முடியாது தன் முனிவரும்
raataa varaatatalen naan varavillai

Concessive negative form e.g., ராதம்சிவையே, பார் முடியாது
oruealai, raataa vaaraatiruntaalum
naan cenriruppeen

Sentence

Transitive form e.g., தான் கவிதை பயிற்சி.
naan kavitai paṭitteen.

Intransitive form e.g., தான் முற்பணமாக அப்போதான்
naan mounamaaka azuteen.

Direct form e.g., “பார் நீக் மிகுத்து அல்லா சாய்வலியா
“naan unka viṭṭukku vareen” enru
enṇitam connaar.

Indirect form e.g., அவர் நீக் மிகுத்து வந்துசென்றுசரி
avar unka viṭṭukku varuvataaka enṇitam
connaar

Adverbial conditional complex form e.g., இலக்கு அதுத்தான் தன் முனிவரும்.
ciitai vantaal naan varuveen.

Adverbial concessive complex form e.g., கன்னா வண்டாலும் தன் முற்பணமாடதா
kaṇṇan vantaalum naan varamaatṭeen.

As regards the list under boundary of syntactic aspects, no change is made.
In the case of the details under structure, the original list consist of 73 learning points; it has now been revised to 88 learning points. The additional items are given below:

**Phrase**

Noun + plural marker  
e.g., ஆவையமராக்  
avai marañkal.

Noun + case marker  
e.g., மராத்திய வெற்றியின்  
marattai vettinaan.

Pronoun + case marker  
e.g., என்யின்  
enai paar.

Infinitive + participial noun  
e.g., நீ அவைன்  
nii avanai paṭikkac collutal nallatu.

Finite Verb + plural marker  
e.g., அவர்கள் சென்றார்கள்  
avarkal cenraarkal.

Structural change due to sandhi  
Apart from the above, the learning points related to structural change due to sandhi have also been incorporated.

**Clause**

[NP+V.Ph.(conditional)] + NP +V.Ph.  
e.g., நீ நேர்கள் வணிருண்டால்  
nii neerru vantiruntaal paṇam kotuttiruppeen.

40 Particular phrase formulated or formed by 2 independent word forms not only become a compound but also acquire the name of phrase. e.g., அம்மாண் என்று. Here அம்மாண் and என்று are two independent words. When they are conjoined due to sandhi, not only it becomes compound form but also it acquires the status of a phrase in the sentence. Phrase forms acquired as a result of compounding due to sandhi, the middle level structural elements will get changed. Such a change will vary depending on the last sound of the 1st word and the 1st sound of the second word.
NP + [NP+V.Ph. (concessive)] + NP+VP

NP + [NP+V.Ph.(conditional neg.)] + NP +V.Ph.

NP + [NP+V.Ph. (concessiveneg.) ]+ NP+VP

Sentence

Sentence - Word order

Subject-verb

Quantifier-noun

Noun-quantifier

Syntactic relationship among the components of a sentence

e.g., /uni0BA8/uni0BC0/uni0020/uni0BA8/g8126/g8096/uni0020/uni0BB5/g8120/uni0BA4/uni0BBF/g8094/g8120/uni0BA4/uni0BBE/g8100/g8123/uni0020/uni0BAA/uni0BA3/g8123/uni0020/uni0BAA/uni0BBF/uni0BC8/uni0B9F/g8119/uni0BA4/uni0BBF/g8094/g8112/uni0B95/uni0BBE/g8080

nii neerru vantiruntaalum paanism kitaitirukkaatu.

nii naapraaka ootaavittaal oottappantayattil verri pera muityaatu.

nii patikkaviitaalum paarittcayil verriperuvaay

e.g., /uni0BA8/uni0BC0/uni0020/uni0BAA/g8074/g8112/uni0B95/uni0BBE/uni0BB5/uni0BBF/g8117/uni0B9F/uni0BBE/g8100/g8123/uni0020/uni0BAA/uni0BBE/uni0BC0/g8117/uni0BC8/uni0B9A/uni0BAF/uni0BBF/g8127/uni0020/uni0BC6/uni0BB5/g8126/uni0BB1/uni0BBF/uni0BC6/uni0BAA/g8096/uni0BB5/uni0BBE/g8124.

nii paikkaviitaalum parittcayil verriperuvaay

e.g., /uni0B8E/g8104/uni0BB5/uni0BBE/g8124, /uni0BC6/uni0B9A/uni0BAF/g8122/uni0BAA/g8076/g8122/uni0BC6/uni0BAA/uni0BBE/g8094/g8128, பயனிடைல ezuvaaay, ceyappatuppardur, payanilai

(the word order of Subject, Object, Verb)

(e.g., /uni0BA8/uni0BBE/g8121/uni0020/uni0BB5/g8120/uni0BC7/uni0BA4/g8121

naan vanteen. (agreement between subject-verb of 1st person is underlined)

e.g., /uni0BC7/uni0BAA/uni0BA9/uni0BBE/g8112/uni0B95/g8128/uni0020/uni0BAA/uni0BB2

peeṉaakkaḷpala. (agreement between noun-quantifier is underlined )

(e.g., /uni0B87/uni0BB0/g8118/g8076/uni0020/uni0BC7/uni0BAA/uni0BA9/uni0BBE/g8112/uni0B95/g8128

iraṉṭu peenaakkal. (agreement between quantifier-noun is underlined )

(e.g., /uni0B85/uni0BB5/g8121/uni0020/uni0B95/g8118/uni0BA3/uni0BC8/uni0BA9/uni0020/uni0B85/g8074/g8119/uni0BA4/uni0BBE/g8121

avaṉ kannanaṉ atitaan. (the underlined ‘case’ is interrelated with verb)
For the remaining dimensions function and meaning of syntactic aspects, no change is made.

With this minor modification, as suggested above, the list of learning points already proposed, have been retained as the actual outcome (around 300 learning points) of this study, and also found to be viable. This fulfils the Sl.No.5 of the objective.

6. **Salient features of this list / outcome of this study**: The specification (of learning points) provides clarity for teachers, learners, and evaluators apart from the administrators, planners, and so on. The quantifiability (of these points) will enhance the evaluability of learning, thereby enhance the quality of evaluation of the language being learnt. This would obviously help to improve the learning of language in different contexts viz., L₁, L₂, and L₃. The extension of this would also help for getting the existing syllabi of language courses restructured. Further, the study will help to improve the much sought after ‘monitoring and feedback mechanism’ which is very much lacking in language education in the Indian context.

7. **Adoptability**: The result of this study will help to enhance the clarity of contents of syllabus and curriculum and also to improve the quality of text books; Obviously, the construction of tools and scales will also get a face lift.

Most importantly, it would help supplement the NTS scheme especially for the production of its base materials such as *Concept based Continuum of Graded Syllabi* (CCGS), *Concept based Continuum of Graded Tests* (CCGT), etc., to a great extent.

8. **Limitations of the study**: The limitations were many; the learners who formed the experimental group are not homogenous in nature; their number varies from batch to batch, and also Institute to Institute. A flexible approach
has been adopted to understand the concept of $L_2$ in view of the changing situations within this study period. Many a time, the validity and viability have been arrived at through inferences instead of empirical studies.

The 5 dimensions that are discussed in chapter 3 above, are not found included explicitly in the teaching materials available at SRLC. Though basic and advanced course readers in Tamil are available in printed form, the intermediate course material is missing; as a result, the requisite details could not be obtained systematically.

9. **Suggestions for further study**: This study is only a part of the larger whole. In order to derive the maximum benefit of this study, it needs to be followed up by covering other levels of language too viz., phonological, morphological, and semantic levels, so that the learning of language could be approached in a holistic way.

Further, a proper mechanism to impress upon the educational planners also needs to be evolved for convincing them based on the adequate merits of the outcome of these studies. Such an initiative, it is strongly felt, will go a long way for restructuring the language education across the country.