

A Man with extra ordinary brilliance and foresight

Dr. Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan is a highly reputed Malayalam Linguist Historian and a scholarly writer in Kerala. Born in 3.2.1951 at Naduvattom in Alappuzha district in Kerala. Gopalakrishnan completed P.G. course in Malayalam Language and Literature in 1972 underwent Linguistic studies at the Department of Linguistics, University of Kerala. He took Ph.D. Degree under the supervision of Dr. V.I Subrahmoniam, an internationally reputed linguist. Gopalakrishnan's research was on the early phase of Malayalam Language with special reference to Rāmacaritam, the earliest known classical poem in Malayalam.

Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan entered in College Education service of Government of Kerala in July 1976 as lecturer and retired as Deputy Director of Collegiate Education in 2006. After his retirement he continued his research in Malayalam Linguistics in International School of Dravidian Linguistics, Thiruvananthapuram. He continues there as Hon. Professor. He was UGC Emeritus Fellow at the Department of Malayalam, University of Kerala from 2013-16. He was the convener of the expert committee constituted by the Government of Kerala for the preparation of an exhaustive report on the eligibility of Malayalam for the Classical status. Malayalam was declared as a Classical language by the Government of India in 2013. Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan extended his service as a special officer to enquire and report the problems of Linguistic Minorities in Kerala. He submitted the report in 2019.

Main achievements

1. Report on the eligibility of Malayalam for getting the classical status

The antiquity of the language, the richness of its literature and as an integrated pluralistic civilization which has evolved in Kerala, where Malayalam is spoken. It has a unique harmony of antiquity and modernity. This language has a continuous history of more than 2000 years. It belongs to the family of Dravidian languages having a legacy of ancient and modern literary works of high standard. Malayalam is the mother of the visual arts like Kūṭiyāṭṭam and

Kathakaḷi. It is in Malayalam that Kauṭalya's Arthaśāstra got its elaborate interpretation and translation after its composition in Sanskrit language.

Highlighting all these aspects, Dr. Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan prepared the monograph '**Malayalam as a Classical Language**'. Malayalam developed and popularised its characteristic linguistic features even before the Sangam Period. Gopalakrishnan identified the following stages which demarcate the distinct classical features of the language with its subsequent forms

1. Proto Malayalam Classical period up to 800 C.E.
2. Early Malayalam Classical period 800-1300 C.E.
3. Medieval Malayalam Classical period 1300-1600 C.E.
4. Modern Malayalam 1600 CE onwards

2. Origin of Malayalam Language

Naduvattom Gopalakrishnan put forth the following theory on the origin of Malayalam Language, which got wide recognition among linguistic scholars.

“There was a common stage for Tamil and Malayalam in the course of their development which can be called ‘Proto Tamil Malayalam.’ Later the west coast dialect of Proto Tamil Malayalam developed as Malayalam and the east coast dialect of Proto Tamil Malayalam developed on Modern Tamil.”

3. Author of 39 Malayalam books and 6 English books.

These books cover the topics like Malayalam Linguistics; Dravidian Linguistics; Ancient literary genres of Malayalam; Kerala history; Kerala inscriptions; Folklore; Phonological and Morphological studies on early Tamil and Malayalam literary works; Linguistic archaeology; Place names; Kerala culture; Descriptive studies on early and medieval works in Malayalam; Evolution of Malayalam language; Grammatical treatises in Tamil and Malayalam; Interpretations of early and Medieval classical works in Malayalam; Biographical literature; Scripts of Kerala; Loan words in

Malayalam; Bhakti movements in South India; Description on Upaniṣads and Sāstras and History of Malayalam Language.

English Books:

1. Early Middle Malayalam 2013
2. Index of Rāmacaritam 2017
3. A Linguistic and Cultural Study of Tamil and Malayalam 2018
4. Malayalam as a Classic Language- 2020.
5. Grammar of Rāmacaritam 2022
6. Papers on Malayalam Linguistics and Rhetoric 2025
4. Translation of Cilappatikāram in to Malayalam – 2024

Published by the Central Institute of Classical Tamil, Chennai.

5. Malayalam Books Published

	Malayalam Title	English Title	Year
1	Jīvacaritrasāhityam Malayāḷattil (revised 2025)	Biographical Literature in Malayalam	1983, 2025
2	Ātmakadhāsāhityam Malayāḷattil (revised 2025)	Autobiographical literature in Malayalam	1985,1998,2025
3	Rāmacaritavum Prācīnabhāṣāvicāravum	Ramacaritam and the early Malayalam language	1989
4	Kēraḷacaritradhārakaḷ	Sources of Kerala history	1989,2003,2010, 2025
5	Bhāṣāparimaḷam	Fragrance of Malayalam	1994
6	Bhāṣāvicāram	Thought on language	2001,2023
7	Gavēṣaṇarītisāstram	Research Methodology	2003,2009,2012

8	Nāḍōdicaritrakadhakaḷ	Folk historic stories	2008,2010,2012
9	Sāhityamālyam	Garlands of Literature	2008,2019
10	Samskāramudrakaḷ	Cultural signets	2009,2019
11	Rāmacaritaṭaṇattinorāmukham	An Introduction to the study of Ramacaritam	2010
12	Jñānamṛtam	Fundamentals of Hindu Dharma	2011,2025
13	Bhāṣāsāhitya prabōdhanam	Malayalam Catechism	2001,2009,2010, 2012,2015
14	Malayāḷam Classic Bhāṣa: Paḷakkavum Vyaktitvavum	Malayalam Classical Language, Antiquity and individuality	2012,2014,2019
15	Sreṣṭhabhāṣa, Malayalam	Malayalam, a Classical Language	2014,2019
16	Kodungalloor Kochuṇṇa Thampuran (Biography)	Biography, Kodungalloor, Kochunni Thampuran	2015,2017,2018
17	Bhāṣācaritradhārakaḷ	History of Malayalam-sources	2015
18	Kēraḷa samskāradhārakaḷ	Cultural history of Kerala	2016,2021
19	Malayāḷa Bhaṣā caritram (Kērabhāṣa Institute)	History of Malayalam Language	2016,2021
20	Malayāḷa sāhitya caritram, Editor, Kerala Sāhitya Academy	History of Malayalam Literature	2016
21	prācīna malayāḷa mātrukakaḷ	Ancient Malayalam Poems-Specimens (Text and Study)	2016
22	Kēraḷapāṇinīyam (1896)	Keralapaniniyam (1896)	2018,2024

	commentary	Editor	
23	Kēraḷapāṇinīyam (1917) commentary	Keralapaniniyam (1917) Editor	2018,2024
24	Bharaṇabhāṣa akavum puṇavum	Malayalam as an official language	2019
25	Ādhunika Malayāḷakarika, Editor	Modern Malayalam poetry	2019
26	Bhāṣāsamskāra paṭhanāññaḷ	Studies on Malayalam language and culture	2019
27	Prācīna Malayala kāvyasudha	Early Malayalam Poetry	2019
28	Srī Vāsudēvasthavam	Hymns on Lord Vasudeva	2019
29	Sāhitya kairali	Malayalam Literary Essays	2020-21
30	Samskarakairali	Kerala Culture	2020-21
31	Bhāṣāpraṇayikaḷ	Makers of Malayalam Language	2020-21
32	Drāviḍahimagirigalita	Malayalam- Its Dravidian Origin	2020-21
33	Puthusseri Rāmacandran - Biography	Puthussery Ramachandran	2022
34	Anuṣṭānagānakairali	Devotional Malayalam songs	2023
35	Bhāṣayum samskāravum	Language and Culture	2024
36	Sāhityattinṇe vaḷikaḷ	Malayalam Literary Sources	2024
37	(Cilappatikāram)Translation	Cilappatikaram	2024
38	Cārukēraḷabhāṣa	Studies on Malayalam	2025
39	Bhāṣayum Paṭhanavum- Dr. V.I. Subrahmoniam, (Translation)	Studies on Language	1974, 2025

Awards : (1) Kerala Sahitya Academy

Award for Scholarly literature 2012 for
the book 'Samskaramudrakal'

- (2) Research Award for the year 2014
instituted by the Research wing of
Catholicate College, Pathanamthitta,
Kerala
- (3) DLA Linguistic award for Studies in
Early Language 2014.
- (4) Prof. M. Krishnan Nair memorial
award 2016
- (5) A.P. Udayabhanu Smaraka Varada
Puraskaram, 2017
- (6) Prof. Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai
Memorial Award, 2019
- (7) Kerala Sahitya Acadami I.C. Chacko
Endowment Award for Scholarly
Literature, 2019
- (8) Thuravur Visvambharan Memorial
Tapsya Award 2022.
- (9) Mother tongue day celebration-
Recognition and Honour by the Chief
Minister of Kerala- 2024
- (10) Cilappatikāram translation-
Recognition and Honour by His
Excellency Governor of Tamilnadu,
2025.

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