INTRODUCTION:

History of Karnataka

Kannada is a Dravidian language which is spoken widely by people in the South Indian state of Karnataka. Kannada has been developing as both a language and literature for over 2000 years and eminently merits recognition as a classical language. The language has roughly 40 million native speakers who are called Kannadigas (Kannadigaru), and a total of 50.8 million speakers according to a 2011 census. Kannada stands at 32nd position as the most widely spoken language in the world.

The name Karnataka or Kannada is very old. It occurs as early as the sixth century in Varahamihira’s Brihatsamhita, and its mention in Somadeva’s Kathaharitsagara, probably due to its being mentioned in his source, viz., the Paisachi Brihatkatha of Gunadhya, carries it further back to the earliest centuries of the Christian era.

The derivation of Karnata or Kannada is uncertain. According to Caldwell, the term Karnata was at first a generic denomination of the plateau of the Southern Dekhan. Dr. Gundert proposed Kar-nadu, “the black country,” as the original form of Karnata, in allusion to the black cotton soil which characterizes the plateau of the Southern Dekhan in which the language is spoken. Other scholars have suggested that Karnataka is derived from Karu-nadu “the elevated country,” with reference to the height of the plateau above the sea level. Indian grammarians have expressed the opinion that Kannada is a tadbhava or corrupt form of Karnata, through it is more likely that the latter is a Sanskritised form of the original Kannada. Another approach also exists, i.e. fragrance as indicated by the derivation from Kammitu (fragrant) + nadu (country), which words when compounded become Kannadu. Kannadu i.e., Kannada, thus means the language of the fragrant country, and the epithet fragrant may be considered appropriate to the Kannada country abounding as it does in sandal forests and lotus ponds, the latter being invariably described by Kannada poets as one of its most characteristic features.

Introduction to Kannada Literature

The cultural heritage of Karnataka is rich and variegated. The Kannada words saw their entry through Halmidi inscription of 450 A.D. The Kannada literature saw its first work entitled ‘Kavirajamarga’ during 850 A.D. and in modern times it is blessed with eight Jnanapeetha Awardees. The rich tradition of Kannada literature reveals that the use of various forms and styles used by successive writers from time to time, helped in strengthening the language and literature of Kannada. Literary forms such as Champu, Vachana, Ragale,
Sangathyam and Shatpadi added variety to the structure of the language and beauty to its literature.

Dr. Kittel notes four stages in the history of the language during the past thousand years—viz., Ancient, Mediaeval, Transitional and Modern. It is noticed that the interest of Kannada writers is almost entirely religious. If we exclude grammatical and linguistic works, there is, until the nineteenth century, extremely little that is not connected with religion. The history is mostly sacred history or hagiology; the works of imagination centre round puranic and mythological subjects; and every book opens with a lengthy invocation of all the gods and saints of the author's sect. Probably this might be the reason behind calling the four stages as Jaina, Vira-saivism, Vaishnava and Navoda respectively. The whole course of the history may be compared to a river receiving tributaries. During the first millennium of its course it is an unmingled stream of Jaina thought. In the twelfth century this is joined by the stream of Vira-saivism. In the beginning of the sixteenth century these two are joined by a Vaishnava affluent; and the united stream flows on until in the nineteenth century it is broadened and much modified by a great inrush of Western thought. These different sections of Kannada literature differ not only in religious background, but also in literary form. Jaina works are generally in champu, i.e., mingled prose and verse, the verse being in a great variety of matres and evincing great literary skill. Much Lingayat literature is in prose; its poetry is mostly in monotonous six-lined stanzas, called shatpadi; some is in three-lined tripadi or ragale. The longer Brahmanical works are also in shatpadi; but there are beside many lyrical compositions to popular airs. The literature of the modern period is mostly in prose.

The definitions of the commonly used terms:
- **Champu** - A composition in mingled prose and verse.
- **Ragale** - A lyrical composition with a refrain, to be sung to standard ragas.
- **Sangatya** - A composition to be chanted to the accompaniment of a musical instrument.

If a language is considered a crown; literature is a diamond that shines brightly in it. To understand the beauty of any language it is important to have a proper knowledge about the literature. Kannada is one among those languages where epics have been written in the history. The difficulty that occurs while going through those epics is the style it has been written in. But during those days when epics were written, these styles are considered as measures to judge the quality of the work. The poet's control over the language, skill of using vocabulary and ability to match the rules are tested based on styles like chandassu and alankara (Figures of Speech).

The great bulk of the literature until the nineteenth century had been in verse. To read Halagannada (Old Kannada) books in the ordinary tone of speaking is to miss much of their beauty; they are intended to be chanted. When thus chanted with correct phrasing and musical intonation, all the author's grace of alliteration, metaphor and matre are brought out, and the effect is highly pleasing. Even those who cannot follow the meaning will listen to such chanting with delight.

Understanding the styles and structures of halagannada poems is a time consuming and laborious task. With the help of technology this laborious task can be made easy. There is a need for a tool which assigns matras to letters, analyse the prosody rules and hence classifies the chandassu of the given poem.

**OBJECTIVE:**
1. To assign matras to individual letters by understanding the features of the letter and features of the next letter
2. To group the words based on count of matras
3. To classify the poem into corresponding prosody type

**METHODOLOGY:**

![System Architecture Diagram]

The Architecture of the prosody classifier is shown in Figure. Input is in the form of Kannada poem. During processing, letters are identified and the identified letters are stored as keys in the dictionary and their properties as values. Depending on these values, matres are assigned to each letter and stored in a list called matre list. Using this matre list, gana is formed and latervrutta is classified. The results are then displayed on the screen and also written to output file.

**CONCLUSION:**

Language is a means of communication. It helps us to express ourselves in a simpler way. Any language will have grammatical rules in it which makes the language more versatile and comprehensible. The life and soul of a language that which constitutes to its substantial individuality, and distinguishes it from all others is its grammar. Therefore preserving these rules is very significant and essential.

In Kannada Grammar, Chandassu plays a major role. Since immemorial time Chandassu has been adopted in both prose and poem of Kannada literature’s history. The arrangement of letters according to predefined rules, rhythmic structure of the lines, alliterations and many other small but systematic works adds a beauty to the content. This project assigns matre to the poems that have been given as input thus making it easy to pronounce. This also helps the learners of Indian arts like Gamaka and classical music where pronunciation has been given high importance. Also, We have made an attempt to make the magic box (Computer) understand the rules and regulations of the Chandassu and recognize the given input’s category. i.e., The present work classifies the given input into their respective Vrutta forms.

**FUTUREWORK:**

In future the work needs to be extended to classifying Matragana and Amshagana, and displaying their respective categories. Also ‘ShithilaDvithva’ is a constraint on Chandassu which we have not adopted here [24] [25]. The future work can include a better version of classification of Aksharagana which resolves ‘ShithilaDvithva’ also.