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***Linguistic Purism and Language Planning in a
Multilingual Context***

Tamil in Pondicherry

L. Ramamoorthy, Ph.D.

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Preface

Tamil is a dynamic living language with ancient heritage and moorings. Continuously spoken and written for over 2000 years, Tamil offers many interesting dimensions for us to investigate. Arguments in favor of some form of *linguistic purism* to maintain the distinctive characteristic of Tamil have their roots in an ancient grammar, possibly written two-thousand years ago. That the same tendency comes up with great vigor in modern times is amazing, and deserves a deep study in conjunction with sociological, political, cultural and even economic factors.

In this monograph I undertake this study of linguistic purism in a multilingual context, drawing materials from the Union Territory of Pondicherry, where the majority of the people speak Tamil as their first language.

Pondicherry was a colony of the French, and had been ceded to the Indian Union by the French in 1962. This Union Territory has three enclaves: the Tamil enclave surrounded by Tamilnadu, a Malayalam enclave surrounded by Kerala, where Malayalam is the dominant language, and a Telugu enclave surrounded by Andhra Pradesh, where Telugu is the dominant language. In addition, because of Aurobindo cultus, a good number of Bengalis find their residence in Pondicherry. In addition, since joining the Indian Union, a good number of the speakers of the Indo-Aryan family of languages have arrived to pursue their business and other interests. Again, modern New Age Movement followers from Europe and America make Pondicherry their destination for spiritual and corporate living in Auroville.

Language planning becomes, then, very complex. Added to this mix is the demand and insistence on pursuing linguistic purism in so far as Tamil is concerned. When Hindi and other Indian languages seek their renewal and enrichment deleting commonly used Urdu-Persian-Arabic words and constructions, and drawing heavily from Sanskrit sources, Tamil, another classical language of India, with continuity as its important distinguishing mark, seeks to strengthen and enlarge its domains of use drawing from its own ancient sources, etc.

This book is part of my continuing research interests relating to sociological, political and linguistic processes in Indian languages. I do hope that the readers will find this book interesting and useful to understand the linguistic undercurrents in India.

My grateful thanks are due to the editors of *Language in India* www.languageinindia.com, who have kindly provided me with this opportunity to publish my thoughts and concerns.

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Chapter 1

A Study of Language Use in Pondicherry

Introduction

Multilingualism in India is seen as a normal and natural phenomenon. The existence and use of multilingualism is recorded in ancient Sanskrit and Tamil texts, and throughout the recorded history.

In modern times, multilingualism has been closely associated with political activities as well. Multilingualism in modern Indian society has received pointed attention in many research studies, for example, by Pandit (1972) Southworth and Apte (1974), Kachru (1978), Srivastava (1980), Shapiro and Sachiffiman (1981), Pattanayak (1981), Khjubchandani (1983) and Annamalai (1986).

Even as India is a multilingual nation, the Indian States or provinces that constitute India are also equally multilingual. Each State within India has a dominant regional language, but within every State there are around 20% of the total population of that State speak one or more minority languages (Khjubchandani 1972).

People in India perceive multilingualism differently from people in Western countries. The Indian perception of multilingualism is well characterised by Pattanayak 1984 in the following words:

The dominant monolingual orientation is cultivated in the developed world and consequently two languages are considered a nuisance, three languages uneconomic and many languages absurd. In multilingual countries, many languages are facts of life; and restriction in the choice of language use is a nuisance, and one language is not only uneconomic, it is absurd (Pattanayak 1984:82).

According to Southworth (1980:79), multilingualism is an integral part of every social segment of life, which many Indians adjust at a very early stage. He argues that different languages, dialects and “sharply distinct styles of speech are complementarily distributed in the speech of individuals and groups ... [This] minimizes their competition with each other.” The presence of diversity with tolerance as well as respect for the same leads to regular inter-lineages between different groups which produce a change in the pattern of communication and also aids the informal learning of languages from the environment (Srivastava, 1980: 92).

Pondicherry – Geographical Spread

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Linguistic Purism and Language Planning in a Multilingual Context: Tamil in Pondicherry

The Union territory of Pondicherry comprises of four erstwhile French colony, namely, Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe and Yanam. Pondicherry and Karaikal regions are embedded in South Arcot and Thanjavur Districts of Tamilnadu respectively. Yanam is a small area encircled by the East Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh. Mahe is enclaved within the the Kannur and Kozhikode districts in Kerala. Of these segments, the total area of Pondicherry alone is 293 sq.km. with a total population of 608388 (Census of Indian 1991). (The 2001 Census is not available for Pondicherry. It appears that for some natural disaster reason, this data may never be made available. In any case, a better and clearer picture will soon be worked out through the ensuing 2011 Census.)

The Pondicherry district is not a contiguous area. It is inter spread within the South Arcot District of Tamilnadu. It is divided into one municipality and 6 communes, having 69 revenue villages.

Language Composition of Pondicherry

The territory has a very interesting language composition. An important feature of the 1961 Census was that as many as 55 Indian and foreign languages were returned as the mother tongues of the people in this small territory. Apart from all the 18 official languages recognised by the Indian constitution, languages or dialects such as Bhojpuri, Coorgi (Kodava), Gorkhali, Konkaru, Mawari, Parsi and European languages such as French, Portuguese, Irish, Polish and German also were recorded as the mother tongues of the population. Among other reasons such diversity may have been due to three distinct linguistic areas. For example, Yanam is surrounded by Andhra Pradesh where Telugu is the dominant language, Mahe is surrounded by Kerala where Malayalam is the dominant language, and Pondicherry and Karaikal are surrounded by Tamilnadu where the dominant language is Tamil.

The fact that several languages are spoken in the area, which comprises the Union Territory, has another historical explanation. South India witnessed waves of immigrants of various races and castes for several centuries. Because of Pondicherry's long and close relation with Chandernagore in Bengal (a French Territory under colonial rule), and the existence of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, a good number of communities from the north and eastern states of India at different periods, such as Bengalis, have settled down in Pondicherry.

The close association of Pondicherry with the Maratha and Muslim rulers since 17th century introduced Urdu and Marathi into the territory. The Auroville and International City established by the devotees of "Mother" attracted many foreigners.

Official Language of Pondicherry

Pondicherry Official Language Act is also peculiar in its provisions: five languages, namely, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, English and French are recognised for official purposes. Official

language Act of the Union Territory states that Tamil language shall be the language to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the Union Territory. In the case of Mahe, Malayalam language may be used, and in the case of Yanam, Telugu language may be used for all or any of the official purposes of the Union Territory. The English language may be used for all or any of the official purposes of the Union Territory. The French language shall remain the official language of establishments so long as the elected representatives of the people shall not decide otherwise (Act 28, Gazetteer, Pondicherry Vol.1 p. 911). (The Pondicherry Official Language Act 1965 No.3 of 1965 La-Gazette de l'Etat de Pondicherry, No.13).

Even though the Official language Act of Pondicherry recognised Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and French, most of the official transaction is carried out in English only. The earlier records in the Registrar offices and municipalities were maintained in French. Due to the scattered geographical nature of the Union Territory in Kerala and Andhra Pradesh, the use of English is not dispensed with.

The Government of Pondicherry has created a Tamil Development cell to promote the use of Tamil for official purposes. Even then, the switch over from English to Tamil has not been completed just as we notice Tamilnadu. One may conjecture that this transition will not be smooth nor will it be quicker.

Bilingualism in Pondicherry

Apart from the languages included in the VIII Schedule of the Constitution of India, many minor languages are also spoken in Pondicherry. In addition to the mother tongues, residents of the Union Territory demonstrate in their daily activities significant knowledge of other tongues. This multilingualism is a widely prevalent phenomenon in Pondicherry. It can be said that almost all minority speakers, except a few people in Aurobindo Ashram, know Tamil as it is the dominant language of the region.

One interesting aspect in Pondicherry is that even a monolingual Hindi/Bengali can live in Ashram area without learning Tamil. English is the sole contact languages for Aurovilleans. (Note, however, such pockets or locations, where the dominant regional language is not known to the residents of these pockets, is not unusual in India.)

Each language group knows other languages by virtue of the environment of schooling. The languages known to each mother tongue group as given in 1981 Census is tabulated below. Only major languages known to significant strength of population are identified for this purpose.

Mother tongue	Other languages known in decreasing order of strength	
Assamese	(A)	Bengali
Bengali	(B)	B E H Ta
Gujarathi	(G)	G -E- Ta - H =Skt - B

Hindi	(H)	H – E Ta – G – P – U – u
Kannada	(K)	Ka, Ta – E – H
Malayalam	(M)	M – Ta – E – H -
Marathi	(M)	Ma – T – E – H
Oriya	(O)	O – E _ G – Ta
Punjabi	(P)	P – E – H – Ta
Sindhi	(S)	S – E – H – Ta
Tamil	(Ta)	Ta – E – Te – H - U
English	(E)	E – Ta – H
Telugu	(Te)	Te – Ta – E – H
Urdu	(U)	U – Ta – E – H

Subramaniam (1997:28) states that the measure of known language by the members of a speech community is an indicator of *language load*, carried by the community. In Pondicherry, for every speech community, the language load is certainly high because of the multilingual set up.

The 14 mother tongue groups listed in the above table may be classified into two broad groups: 1. People with the knowledge Hindi and English for preferred or high performance, and 2. People with knowledge Tamil and English for preferred or high performance. Speakers of languages such as Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Oriya, Punjabi and Sindhi use Hindi and English as the dominant language next to their mother tongue. But, for other language groups such as Telugu, Kannada, Marathi and Urdu, it is Tamil and English that are known to majority of the speakers, next to their mother tongue.

Other languages		Percentage to total speaker of particular languages		
		Tamil	English	Hindi
Bengali	4.18		58.46	19.19
Gujarathi	27.3		41.8	14.5
Hindi	29.5		33.2	-
Kannada	54.3		26.8	1.5
Malayalam	5.8		21.1	1.3
Marathi	54.6		20.6	5.8
Oriya	3.16		44.9	25.9
Punjabi	3.4		54.6	30.2
Sindi	2.5		50	10.3
Telugu	39.2		7.4	4.6
Urdu	60		8.1	1.8

The percentage of people with knowledge of Hindi, English and Tamil shows very interesting results.

Among north and east Indian languages, in Bengali, Oriya, Sindhi and Punjabi speech communities, the percentage of Tamil knowing population ranges from 2.5 – 4.1 only.

But, in the case of Gujarati and Hindi groups, the percentage of Tamil knowledge is higher, which ranges from 27-29 percentage.

Among the Marathi and Urdu mother tongue group, more than 50% of the population knows Tamil as in the case of people belonging to South Indian languages.

Among the South Indian language speakers, Kannada mother tongue group in Pondicherry has the highest percentage of 54.3 in the knowledge of Tamil.

But, in the case of Telugu and Malayalam, the percentage is lower than that of Kannada group among the minority speakers in the Union Territory. This is because they have separate pockets where Malayalam and Telugu mother tongue groups occupy the majority position respectively. But the percentage of Tamil knowing population in these groups is less than that of Kannada mother tongue group. This is due mainly to the separate geographical locations like Mahe and Yanam regions where the majority of the population is monolingual in Malayalam and Telugu with very few bilinguals.

Similarly, the percentage of people who know English is high among the mother tongue speakers of Bengali, Gujarati, Punjabi and Sindhi. The Hindi knowing people are high among Oriya and Punjabi language groups. It is an interesting fact to note the low percentage of Hindi knowing people and high percentage of Hindi and English knowing people in some mother tongue groups like Bengali, Oriya and Punjabi.

Bilingual Situation among the Speakers of Tamil in Pondicherry

The actual language use situation will be much more helpful in working out the linguistic profile of Pondicherry. However, before studying the domains of actual use of languages, the bilingual situation in the majority language, namely, Tamil, may be analysed using 1981 census figures.

Language percentage to total Tamil Population

English	16.9%
Telugu	0.7%
Hindi	0.15%
Urdu	0.12%
Malayalam	0.07%
Kannada	0.1 less than

In both the majority and minority language communities, the language load manifested by English indicates that English has been accepted as the sole contact language in a multilingual set up in Pondicherry, where the absence of Hindi knowing majority is less. The spread of

English is due primarily to schooling opportunities and use of English in transactions in academic, commercial and administrative sector.

Language Use in Pondicherry – A Survey Report

In order to study the language use pattern in Pondicherry, a survey was conducted by taking 3000 samples from Pondicherry district alone. Pondicherry district is the place where people belonging to different groups have been settled for so many purposes.

Even though the survey included the language use patterns of all speech communities, only minority language speakers' use of language was taken for this research. About 275 filled-in questionnaires were collected from people belonging to different speech communities.

In the survey it was identified that thirteen mother tongue groups live in Pondicherry. They are the speakers of 1) Bengali, 2) Oriya, 3) Sindhi, 4) Gujarati, 5) Hindi, 6) Urdu, 7) Nepali, 8) English (Anglo Indian), 9) Marathi, 10) Malayalam, 11) Telugu, 12) Kannada and 13) Franco Indian.

Data were collected from the randomly selected points at different age, sex, economic status, educational levels, etc. When the other tongue speakers were available they were taken for data collection. In this type of collection, the speakers belonging to Punjabi, Sanskrit and Assamese were not available. Speakers belonging to the Anglo-Indians and Franco-Indians communities were also identified in this survey.

An observation of language use by different speech communities or mother tongue groups in the domains of family, friendship, and work place shows systematic allocation of roles to the available languages.

Even though the linguistic minorities show variation between generations, the general use of mother tongue in the family domain is easily observable. The use of language with servants is the necessary factor for some speech communities to learn majority languages.

The languages used by different mother tongue groups in different domains are given in the following table.

Language	Family	Servant	Friends	works place/bazar
Bengali	B	Ta	H, B, E	E, B, Ta
Oriya	O	Ta	O, H, E	E, O, H
Sindhi	S	H, E	H – S – E	
Gujarathi	A	Ta	G, H, Ta, E	G-H-Ta - E
Hindi	H	Ta	Hi – Ta – E	H, E, T
Urudhu	U	Ta	U – Ta – E	Ta – E – Hi
Nepali	N	Ta	N – H – T, E	N – H – E

Marathi	M	Ta	Ma – Ta, E	M, Ta – E
Malayalam	Ma	Ta	Ma – Ta – E	Ma – Ta – E
Telugu	Te	Ta	Te – Ta – E	Te – Ta – E
Kannada	Ka	Ta	TaKa – Ta – E	Ka – Ta – E
Franco-Indian	Fr – Ta	Ta	Fr – Ta – E	Fr – Ta – E
Anglo-Indian	Eg – Ta	Ta	Eg – Ta	Ta – Eg

Mother tongue is used in their family and self prayer situation by all speech communities. Except Bengali, Oriya, Sindhi mother tongue groups, all the other speech communities use Tamil and English with friends and in workplace. But Bengali, Oriya and Sindhi people use Hindi and English, in addition to their mother tongue, in the said situations.

The correlation between the occupation of the informants who belong to a particular speech community and the pattern of language use will help us understand the reason for such patterns of usages.

The people belonging to Bengali, Oriya and Sindhi are mostly residents of Aurobindo Ashram and some are in professions such as doctors and architects. Their contact with the local population is very limited except in Bengali situation. People belonging to Gujarati and Hindi linguistic groups are involved in business. Hence the use of Tamil, Hindi, and English are essential for their survival. Rest of the minorities are bilinguals who use Tamil for all purposes, and their mother tongue within family interaction.

Language Choice in Television

Technological advancements bring multi-language programmes in Television. When so many diverse language programmes are available, the choice of a particular language by the informant to watch T.V. shows his or her loyalty towards that language.

Even without knowing a particular language, one may choose certain channels because of value and interest the viewers expect and enjoy in particular programmes. But, here, the language selected by the informants frequently is alone taken into consideration. For example, watching programmes in the Discovery channel or Star Movies does not mean the viewers are more loyal to English language. When channels in mother tongue or related languages are available, how frequent they select other language channels is important.

It is observed that there exist two trends in the choice of channels by the informants. People belonging to Bengali, Oriya, Sindhi, Gujarati, and Hindi Languages watch programmes in Hindi Language in Doordarshan and Zee TV most frequently. But the other people belonging to Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Urdu, and Kannada watch Tamil channels more frequently. Though channels like Udaya, Gemini, Asianet, etc., are available for Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam speakers respectively, they watch Tamil channels more frequently. Marathi and Urdu language speakers also watch Tamil channels just as Telugu minorities.

To understand the patterns of language use by the Marathi and Urdu people, the history of their settlement reveals certain facts. The people belonging to Telugu, Marathi, Urdu linguistic groups settled down in Pondicherry some generations ago during the Maratha and Muslim rule. They became part and parcel of the Tamil community over generations while maintaining their own language and culture in specific domains of activity. But, for the other north and east Indian language communities, even though they are also settled minorities, their settlement is very recent, only during second half of the last century. Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville town attracted many north and east Indians and foreigners to Pondicherry. Their purpose of settlement and location of settlement are in such a way that they need not depend on majority Tamils for all purposes. But, people who are engaged in trade have to mingle with the majority people and thereby acquired some competence in Tamil. Their learning Tamil is for a specific purpose.

So, in Pondicherry, the language use patterns depend mostly on the duration of settlement, purpose of migration, and locality where people live. The systematic allocation of languages for different functions by the minorities helps them not only to maintain their mother tongues but also facilitates easily and productively living in multilingual setup.

Such patterns of language use in multilingual and multicultural setup give rise to a functionally meaningful pluralism in which many languages will neither be a load nor inconvenience.

Let me conclude this chapter with a quote from Srivastava (1980) that “the most relevant characteristic of Indian bilingualism has been its allocation of social roles to different languages following within the range of verbal operative of a given speech community. The non-competing nature of these roles sustained the non-conflicting and socially stable pattern of bilingualism.”

Chapter 2

Linguistic Landscape Tokens in Pondicherry

The existing patterns of multilingualism and multiculturalism in Pondicherry are influenced by many historical factors.

Factors that Contribute to Multilingualism and Multiculturalism in Pondicherry

Pondicherry was the capital of French India for nearly 138 years. At time of India's independence in 1947 Pondicherry was under French rule. The freedom movement in British India had an impact in Pondicherry also. A treaty of cession was signed by the two countries in May 1956. It was ratified by the French Parliament in May 1962. On August 16, 1962 India and France exchanged the instruments of ratification under which France ceded to India the full sovereignty over the territories it held. Pondicherry and other enclaves of Karaikkal, Mahe and Yanam came to be administered as Union Territory of Pondicherry from July 1, 1963.

Even as the French finally gave up their sovereign power over Pondicherry in 1956, the agreement between France and Free India provided for the continuity of French culture and French institutions in this territory.

During the Indian Freedom Struggle, Pondicherry became a place of refuge for many freedom fighters, who fought against British Rule in India.

Even before the establishment of Aurobindo Ashram, the culture of Pondicherry was nurtured by the French ideology, namely, equality, liberty and fraternity. Students learned French as well as English in Pondicherry. This facilitated the development of multilingualism and multiculturalism.

Pondicherry thus developed a special European flavor with both English and French, not found in any significant manner anywhere in the Indian sub-continent. French influence is evident even now in the realms of language, attire, food, music, architecture, arts and crafts and even in matters of customs and conventions. Although the vast majority of the people in Pondicherry are bound by Indian cultural traditions, a good number of people who have some kind of link with the French people are still open to French cultural influence.

After Pondicherry became an integral part of Free India, and with the emergence of Vedantic Hinduism as the main and fashionable trend among the educated Hindus, Aurobindo Ashram attracted many people from around the country as well as from abroad to Pondicherry. New Age movements that swept the western countries brought a good number of westerners to Pondicherry because of the growing influence of the theology of Aurobindo in Europe and

America. The Mother in Aurobindo Ashram became an icon, and the cult of meditation and related activities grew in great intensity.

Auroville, an International City or habitat, was mainly a creation of the followers and admirers of Aurobindo and the Mother. Auroville and Aurobindo Ashram also found great support with the India Government, in order to display the nation's broad and generous international posture of Indian foreign policy.

As Pondicherry has been a Union Territory since its accession to India, a good many government officials were and are from the Central Government, lent to the Union Territory on deputation. The establishment of an advanced medical college, JIPMER, in Pondicherry 50 years ago brought in people with diverse linguistic backgrounds to this small Union Territory. In the last two decades, the establishment of a Central University also helped the growth of multilingualism and multiculturalism as teaching faculty and students came from all over India.

Thus, these two institutions became a great instrument to open the door for people from all over the world and from other parts of India to enter Pondicherry and seek their permanent residence there.

Pondicherry has a very long socio-cultural history that could be traced back to Sangam period through the evidences found in ancient Tamil Literature. That the territory had trade relations with the Romans and the Greeks is also proved through the archeological excavations in Arikamedu, near Pondicherry. The non-linguistic items such as pottery, vessels, coins, etc., excavated from the site may throw more light on the socio cultural life of the people of that period.

Linguistic Landscape of Pondicherry

However, our concern here is the study of linguistic landscape of Pondicherry. Linguistic Landscape (LL) according to Landry and Bourhis (1997) refers to linguistic objects, which mark the public area.

The Union Territory of Pondicherry is the creation of the Seventh Amendment to the Indian Constitution. The role of the Government of India is predominant in shaping the language landscape of the Union Territories in India. This somewhat restricts and constrains the administrative freedom of these Union Territories. Their policies relating to language and education are politically and linguistically influenced by the decisions of the Government of India.

However, as in the case of Pondicherry, where the citizens have greater sense of identity with the people in the adjacent major states, there may develop some conflict between the Center and the Union Territory. On the other hand, it is also a fact that the influence of the adjacent state/s on Pondicherry is so heavy in terms of identity issues, pursuing an independent policy ignoring such

identity issues also becomes a problem. This dilemma is very much evident from the experiences of Pondicherry with regard to administrative and education policies. The fluidity one notices in the policies may be due to the pressures of dominant linguistic group and minority population.

The study of Linguistic Landscaping codes and items in a place like Pondicherry, which is historically ancient, multilingual, multicultural and politically diverse, and was under an alien colonial power, the French, brings out many insights that will be very helpful in shaping the language landscape of other newly formed states. This goal is also part of this chapter, even as I try to focus on the language landscape of Pondicherry in great details.

In this chapter I attempt to work out an analysis of the following:

- (1) The linguistic landscape code with respect to the domains of education and administration.
- (2) The reflections of language landscape on the sociocultural life of Pondicherry and the role of Government and others in this context.

The language landscape items selected for this chapter include personal names, street names and some official documents.

Linguistic Landscape and Administration

Even though the multilingual set-up of Pondicherry is complex, none of the minority language speakers constitutes more than 10% of the total population of the region.

In the Union Territory of Pondicherry, among the minority languages, Malayalam occupies the first position in terms of the numerical strength of its speakers. The second largest minority language is Telugu.

We must remember that the language of administration in a multilingual setup has a great role to play. The official language policies are framed in the Union Territory of Pondicherry keeping in view the inherent discontinuity of the land mass of the territory.

Official Language of Pondicherry

As already discussed in Chapter 1, the Pondicherry Official Language Act provides for the use of five languages for official purposes. The Official language Act of the Union Territory states that Tamil language shall be the language to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the Union Territory. In the case of Mahe, Malayalam language may be used, and in the case of Yanam, Telugu language may be used for all or any of the official purposes of the Union Territory. The English language may be used for all or any of the official purposes of the Union Territory. The French language shall remain the official language of establishments so long as the elected representatives of the people shall decide otherwise (Act 28, Gazetteer, Pondicherry Vol.1 p.

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911). (The Pondicherry Official language Act 1965 No.3 of 1965 La-Gazette de l'Etat de Pondicherry, No.13).

Even though the Official language Act of Pondicherry recognised Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and French, most of the official transaction is carried out in English only. So, the inconsistent language landscape code with regard to administration is the use of English instead of Tamil in the Government.

Even though the official language policy states that Tamil should be used for official purposes, it is not at all followed by the Government. All correspondences to the public are only in English. Action Committee for Tamil Development (ACTD) is a vocal organization, mostly of Tamil teachers and scholars, which aims at making Tamil as the administrative language and medium of instruction, “protecting Tamil from the dominance of other languages.”

It is due to their untiring efforts that the Union Territory administration started using Tamil to a limited extent. Because of their persistent demand, the Union Territory Government issued an order advising all officials to sign official records in Tamil. But the Government does not insist on following this guideline stated in their own memorandum. The Government favors English as the language of power although only a minority is fluent in that language. The ACTD, on the other hand focuses on the convenience of the majority.

Inconsistencies in Linguistic Landscape

Another language landscape item relates to the Government's inconsistency with reference to its order in relating to the use of the very name 'Pondicherry'. The old name of Pondicherry was Puducherry and the French administration used this name in the beginning for its official purpose. However, for many generations now Pondicherry has become the most popularly used name for the city.

A new comer to Pondicherry may be confused on seeing the name boards in the buses. Most of the buses use the name PONDY as a simplified form of Pondicherry. The Tamil groups, through demonstrations and representations, pleaded with the Government and public to use 'Puducherry' instead of Pondicherry. They even conducted demonstrations against the newspapers which use Pondicherry and burned the copies of the Tamil newspaper *Dinamalar*.

The Government passed orders with the due approval of the Assembly, pending the approval of the Central Government to use the name Puducherry in all places. But that order was followed neither by the Government nor by the public. The Government uses “Puducherry” in the Tamil correspondences and in its transport corporation. But when it is written in English, 'Pondicherry' is used. These are a few instances of inconsistency in the use language landscape code/item by the Government and other agencies.

Linguistic Landscape and Education

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The language landscape with respect to education in Pondicherry is as varied as in the case of administration, although for different reasons. Even though the Union Territory of Pondicherry (UTP) has an official language policy, it does not have its own policy of education. Depending upon the geographical location of its units, the Territory adopts the policies of the adjacent states. Thus, as for school education is concerned, the territory is considered to be the part of the respective states such as Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. The school final examination is also conducted by these states for Pondicherry students.

The Union Territory of Pondicherry follows two different policies with respect to language education, namely, a three language formula for Mahe and Yanam regions as adopted by Kerala and Andhra Pradesh and a two language formula for Pondicherry and Karaikal region as followed by Tamil Nadu. Hence Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam are studied as first language in the respective regions. English is the second language. Mahe and Yanam regions have Hindi from V Std., irrespective of the medium of instruction.

The status mentioned above with respect to education is general for the entire territory. However, the situation in urban Pondicherry is complex and unique. The urban Pondicherry still retains the flavor of French rule in the educational system. French is introduced in school curriculum along with Tamil/Hindi both by the Government and the private schools. The number of languages introduced and the manner of introduction such as optional or compulsory level of introduction vary from school to school.

An interesting situation in Pondicherry is that Tamil, Hindi and French are being taught as first languages in the school curriculum. One can select any one of these languages in schools and can change the first language opted at the secondary and higher secondary stages. The situation in urban Pondicherry is such that even without learning the dominant language Tamil, one can finish school education.

Language Landscape in Conflict with Private Schools

The language landscape and education are in a state of confrontation with respect to the policies of private and Government schools. Teaching Tamil, Hindi, or Sanskrit as a compulsory language or optional language differs from school to school. This is clearly illustrated by the following.

The schools, which have

- a) Tamil as compulsory up to IV Std. (Patric Schools)
- b) Tamil as compulsory language up to X Std without Hindi or French even as an optional language (Immaculate).

- c) Tamil and Hindi as compulsory languages (Stella Mary's, Dan Basco).
- d) Tamil as a compulsory language and Sanskrit as a compulsory language up to VIII Std. (Sankara Vidhyala).
- e) Hindi as a compulsory, and Sanskrit from V to IX Standards (Central School)

At the Higher Secondary level, the following languages are available as optional.

- i. Tamil or Hindi (Vivekanandha, Thiruvalluvar)
- ii. Tamil or French (Immaculate, Dan Basco)
- iii. Tamil or Hindi or French (Almost aLanguage Landscapeprivate schools)
- iv. Tamil, Hindi or Sanskrit or French (Patric)
- v. Tamil, French or Hindi (Petit Seminare & Sankara Vidyal)

It is to be noted that the other official languages, namely, Malayalam and Telugu, are not taught in the school curriculum in urban Pondicherry. Similarly, Tamil is not taught in Mahe and Yanam.

An Important Aspect of Language Landscape in the Curriculum

The important language landscape with respect education is that the French language is retained in schools as optional even though it is totally replaced in Administration. The French language in Pondicherry is not only a sign of the past, providing connection with the past and at times nostalgic history, but also it is used as a link language to establish and continue existing ties with France.

When the French quit during 1956, they established an institute, "Alliance Française" to ensure their cultural continuity. They also established "Lycee François" a French school where French is the medium of instruction. The Pondicherry Government also established French medium schools and made provision to study French at B.A., and M.A., levels at colleges and in the university. There are also institutes like Ecole Française, D'Extreme Orient and the Institute François which give unique status to Pondicherry as research centres established by the French Government.

The interests of the Government and the private schools in their continuation of the French language as medium are different. The Government wants to ensure the continuation of the French cultural heritage, but the private schools opt for French to help their students score high marks and find better employment opportunities in France. It is a known fact that the French or other European languages curriculum is not comparable in the depth of study required in the English and Indian languages curriculum.

As for the language landscape in education is concerned, the Government does not have a uniform policy. Also it has no upper hand over the educational policies of the private schools. Pondicherry, being an Union Territory, the government adopts the policy of the Central Government and, at the same time, yields to the pressure of the major dominant group, Tamil, which itself is influenced by the ideology of Tamil Nadu relating to the “imposition of Hindi.”

So far we have seen the remnants of French and the linguistic landscaping in the domains of education and administration. There are other items of linguistic landscaping such as personal names and street names in Pondicherry, which also show the relics of the French culture.

Language Landscape and Personal Names

Personal names constitute an important source for the study of the social, religious, and linguistic aspect of a society. In the case of Pondicherry Union Territory, due to its scattered location, multilingual and multiethnic composition, we notice a lot of interesting aspects in the study of personal names. However in this chapter we restrict ourselves to the impact of the French culture in Pondicherry names.

There exist three types of names that have landscaping relevance among the people of Pondicherry. They are:

- 1) Names with Patronymic titles
- 2) Names with French spelling
- 3) Pure Tamil names with titles.

There is a group of people who have patronymic names in Pondicherry. They are an interesting group of language landscape natives of Pondicherry and have renounced their personal status during the French colonial rule. They are called as ‘Reno cants.’ According to a French Decree, those Reno cants after attaining the age of 21 had to adopt a patronymic name which would be passed on to their descendents also. Any person in the French colony in India, irrespective of their caste, creed or colour, can enjoy the rights and privileges of French citizenship by adopting a special patronymic name.

They constitute as separate ethnic group which has a new culture, which is a blend of both Tamil and French cultures. There are also people with patronymic names without French citizenship in Pondicherry. They are the people who did not opt for French nationality in 1954/1962 (i.e., during the transfer of Pondicherry (but they still constitute the language landscape keeping the names.

The patronymic names are of different kinds. (See for details Jayaraj Daniel, PJDS 1:1, 1991). Consider the patronymic names given below which show the blend of two cultures.

There are also some titles conferred by literary associations to honor particular individuals as follows:-

Ilakkanacutar
Kavimani
Kambavanar
Ellucippavalar

The Government also confers titles to literary scholars such as Tamilmani, Telugu Ratna, Malayala Ratna for their services rendered to their language and literature.

Such types of acts are pursued by linguistic purists and are purely identity related acts due to the impact of the Pure Tamil Movement in Tamil Nadu. Through such acts they intend to protect Tamil and Tamil culture from the domination of other languages/cultures. The Purists also name their children and houses after pure Tamil names and advise others to do so. In order to facilitate the public to use Tamil names for their children they put up sign boards in the street corners near Government hospital with a list of Tamil names.

The acts of purists and the Action Committee for Tamil Development have to be viewed in a broad sociocultural context in order to understand these types of Linguistic Landscapes, which is explained at the end of this chapter. An interesting aspect of the group is that they never venture to change French names, or correct French spelling which violates the grammatical tradition of Tamil. Their acts are directed mainly towards Sanskrit names.

Language Landscape and Street Names

The street names in Pondicherry are another best linguistic landscaping item providing information about the presence of social and linguistic groups and their power relation. The relics of the French rule are still felt in every aspect of Pondicherry such as city planning, roads, houses, etc. The city is constructed with planned streets running across from east to west and north to south in a perfect rectangle. A long canal that runs from north to south was constructed to separate Indians away from the white people. The separation of geographical landscape is reinforced with the linguistic landscape also.

Goffman's (1973) statement that the linguistic token and label on the street makeup the markers of geographical territories as language landscape. Social boundaries are easily seen reflected in the landscape distribution in the case of early Pondicherry. The settlements were made out on the basis of caste, religion and occupation in the Black town, the powerful group occupying the center of the city and around temples, the weavers and business communities forming next layer, with Muslims and others at the outskirts of the city (Arokianathan, 1990 and Sebastian 1999). This is very much evident from the names of the streets and its location such as Vellalathe Street, Chetty Street, Vannaratteru, Hajiyyar Street, Thillai Mestri Viti, etc.,

Pondicherry city remains unique in its numbering the doors of houses in every street. The numbers were given in such a way that odd numbers are on one side of the road and the even numbers on the opposite side. This is a systematic approach in western countries including in France. Strangely, as the city has expanded over the years, this system is not adopted in the extended areas of Pondicherry.

The street names not only portray the settlement of different castes but also indicate the status of languages also. At present there are three types of street name-boards are available in Pondicherry. They are

- 1) French – Tamil bilingual boards
- 2) Tamil – English bilingual boards
- 3) Tamil monolingual boards

The French – Tamil bilingual boards are the earlier version of the boards that were put up by the Government of Pondicherry. In these boards, the names are written in white letters on a blue metal plate. They are fixed on the walls of the house of the beginning and end of every street. The name of the street is written in French on top, and in Tamil next to French. This clearly indicates the status of French in those days and even after the independence.

It is to be noted that the street names in the White town are mostly named after French Governors or other personalities. The streets are still called by those names only in the White part of the town without any change even now.

Rue Victor Simovel
Rue Morasin
Rue D'orleen

The Second types of boards are Tamil-English bilingual boards, erected later on. These cement boards are yellow in colour and the names are written in black letters. They are placed on the side of every street. The names are written in Tamil first and then in English, which reflects the status of Tamil now-a-days. These boards are found in all the streets of Black town and a few in White Town. The names are given after temples (Muthu Mariamman Koil Street, Cathedral Street), Caste (Chetty Street), Political leaders (Nehru Street), etc.

Some streets named after the French personalities and caste names were replaced in later days indicating the social changes taking place.

Rue Duplexi	-	Nehru Street
Kosakadi viiti	-	Ambalathadaiyar viiti
Chinna Papara viiti	-	Savorirayalau Street

Itaiyar teru - nainiyappa pillai Steet.

Even though the names are changed, one can find the old names in French plates and the sign boards of private commercial establishments and in the speech of the people.

Mission street - Rue Chathedral - Mada kovil teru

The third types of street names are Tamil boards that appear in the extension areas. The newly developed areas are named after Tamil poets, Tamil political leaders, etc.,

Anna Nagar
Thantai Periyar Nagar
Bharathidasan Nagar
Kamban Nagar

Tamil identity and love of Tamil become the focus in the naming of streets by the Tamil people.

The street names in Pondicherry show change in the status of languages, namely, French, English, and Tamil. Also the social changes taking place in the society are reflected in the naming process. It is also noticed that the Government's use of English along with Tamil helps the multilingual population and tourists.

Conclusion

The reminiscence of French glory is reflected in every aspect of Pondicherry. It was the French who constructed the present city. Before that it was a small hamlet. The present multilingual, multiethnic composition is partly due to French colonialism and French ideology.

Even in the present trend of global English domination, Pondicherry tries to retain the French culture and French language in some form. French language had a dominant role during the colonial days and its traces are left in the administration, education, street names, personal names, etc. The linguistic landscaping indicates the changing power relation of languages and the role of purists in shaping the Linguistic Landscape. It should be recorded that Tamil literary activities are more frequent and highly appreciated in Pondicherry.

The identity related activities put forward by Tamil purists is mainly due to multilingual and multicultural composition of Pondicherry, more specifically the position of Pondicherry as a Union Territory with limited powers, wherein Hindi has to be given some importance. The presence of French and other foreigners due mainly to colonialism and the presence people of other States due to scattered location of the region, and attraction of Auroville and the Ashram, make the dominant majority people feel as if they are a minority.

Added to this, the economy of Pondicherry, except its agriculture, is controlled by other tongue groups (Pierre Lachaier 1997). The linguistic domination of French, English and other economically dominant power groups has created a sense of insecurity among the educated Tamil people.

Apart from this, the famous Tamil poets Bharathiar and Bharathidasan had inspired a sense of Tamil pride in the minds of Tamils, both scholars and lay citizens. The pure Tamil movement in the adjacent State of Tamil Nadu and the long literary tradition of Tamil make the people in Pondicherry to fight against the dominance and to do identity related activities. When the majority language Tamil is denied of a major role in education and administration, even though there is an official sanction for its major role, it is natural for any group to react against it.

The Government of Pondicherry with respect to linguistic landscaping activities tries to maintain policy of plurality with fluidity. Most of the higher officials are drawn from central Government services and transfer of staff within Pondicherry to other linguistic areas such as Mahe and Yanam, and inter-state communication prevent the use of Tamil in administration.

The policy of the Government with regard to language use in education and administration in the context of the multilingual composition of the population is varied, inconsistent and incoherent. Apart from that, the elected representatives of the state also do not want to antagonize any citizen as the vote of each one decides the political future of the politician. They have to perform strict balancing acts with both Tamil purists and other language groups.

It is purely for political reasons that the Government is strictly not emphasizing its policies. The local dominant elite groups' activities are directed towards safeguarding Tamil language and culture against the domination of the other power groups. But the very interesting aspect with regard to French language is that both the Government and the purists do not oppose French. Both consider the French language and its culture as their prestigious cultural heritage.

Chapter 3

European Impact and Paradigm Shift in Tamil Development

Introduction

Thomas Kuhn (1962), in his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* coined the term *paradigm* to refer to “accepted examples of actual scientific practice which provide models from which a coherent tradition of scientific research subsequently springs”. Later he modified his definition and distinguished between *disciplinary matrix* and *paradigm*. The entire constellation

of beliefs, values, techniques ... shared by the members of given community he referred to as disciplinary matrix. He continued to call *paradigm* the exemplary past achievements, (Kuhn 1962).

The notion of paradigm has been applied to the entire history of the study of language from antiquity onward. “Other historians of linguistics have seen the early nineteenth century as the watershed which established the first genuine paradigm in linguistics and have accordingly applied the notion of paradigm only to the 19th and 20th centuries but have disagreed on the question of how many paradigms must be recognized”

In the case of Tamil, though many paradigms at different periods exist, there are evidences that reveal distinct paradigms before and after the European contact. This chapter tries to explain the shift in the paradigm in the development of Tamil caused by the influence of the European impact. This is done through an analysis of the contribution of European scholars during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Modernization and Society

A language is seen “developed” when it is used in various domains of activity, meeting the needs of its users for various purposes. “Development” is often gauged by the number and variety of domains of use in “modern” times. The “use” is determined by the demands made by the society on the language, how efficiently the language carries out this demand to the satisfaction of those who use that language. The development of a language is, therefore, shaped by the social and economic forces and the political will of the users of a particular language.

Modernization

Generally speaking, Indian traditional societies are organized on the ideologies based on religion, mythology, supremacy of social conventions and constraints through the institution of caste, and individuals with sanctioned unequal rights, etc. Indian society experienced the ideologies of western countries from the 19th century as a result of European contact. Generally speaking, the ideologies of western societies began to be organized on the principles of equality, freedom of individuals and the advancement of the society through knowledge based on reason during that period. Implementation of this European ideology in Indian society resulted in a social process called modernization.

Modernization generally refers to the process of change towards a particular state of existence. The main forces behind this process during the 19th century were industrialization, openness of education and access to it with least social status constraint, etc.

Modern forms of education and industrialization yielded a modern society which was ideologically seen to be opposed to a traditional society. This being the era of globalization, there have been changes in the perception of people and society. The driving forces of globalization

are information revolution and free trade explosion. There is a shift in the entire constellation of beliefs, values, etc in this society due to this social process.

Hence, one can say that there are many paradigms available such as traditional paradigm, modern paradigm, and now global paradigm in Tamil society.

Language Modernization

When the whole society undergoes modernization, language, which is part and parcel of the society, cannot escape from it. Any change that takes place in the society will be reflected on the language of that society. Language, being a social and cultural institution, is not only modernized but it also functions as an instrument of modernization.

A language that has achieved, or is in the process of achieving, modernization is seen to have certain characteristics that are derived from the kind of society in which it is used (Annamalai 1995). Modernization of language in this ideological framework means attaining inter-translatability with languages of industrialized countries, by developing new vocabulary for new areas of knowledge and new styles, and registers (Ferguson 1968). Annamalai (1980) has added another process called simplification as a part of modernization and explained it as the conscious effort to simplify language in the areas of script, sandhi and syntax.

The shift in social paradigm is effected by the social forces like wider education, industrialization, technology, free trade, information revolution, etc., at different periods. Languages also have to equip themselves adequately to cope with these social changes. They do develop in the course of time. But all the changes due to historical evolution could not be considered as real language development.

The changes in the language that express the changing social paradigms reflect the development in that particular language. Conscious planning or continued use in new domains achieves this type of language development.

When languages are equipped to express new concepts, or when they function effectively in new paradigms, they are considered developed. They express those concepts adequately. The engine of language development is its use (Annamalai, 1992). Thus, the paradigm shift in the society is caused by the social forces whereas in language development, the shift is caused by its use.

Paradigms in Tamil

The paradigm shift in Tamil development cannot be examined without reference to the history of its use, which has not been well documented. Tamil has a very long literary tradition. The written history of Tamil is almost 2500 years old. The literary evidences show that Tamil was used for creative literature, grammatical treatise, commentary, etc. The Bakthi literary tradition shows that Tamil was used to codify philosophical and moral discourses. It is evident from inscriptions

that Tamil was used to some extent for administrative purposes such as recording decrees. Thus, Tamil was a developed language even at that period.

The modernization of Tamil society due to the impact of industrialization and science and technology during the 20th century created a demand for Tamil modernization. The introduction of Tamil in the new domains of activity and the creation of technical terms, registers, etc., are some aspects of modernizing efforts which were consciously planned. When we compare the use of Tamil in the present context with its earlier use throughout its history, we could notice a paradigm shift.

There are evidences to show a paradigm shift in the development of Tamil during the 17th & 18th centuries as well. This paradigm shift was the result of European contact and direct contribution of the Christian missionaries. Roman coins have been identified in various excavations. There are also references to *Yavanar* 'Greek and Roman' in the old Tamil literature, revealing established trade links between Europeans and Tamils during the Cankam period. Loan words from the Greek sources were also identified in the Cankam literature to bear testimony to this trade contact. The European contact initially started through trade, missionary work and politics and it ended in colonization. Even though the European contact had been there since Cankam period, it had its major impact on the society and language only during the 17th and 18th centuries. The impact has continued to grow in subsequent centuries.

Impact of Christian Missionaries

As Panikkar (1929: 183) has noted, "the Portuguese came first to India with a Cross in one hand and sword in the other and the conversion of the inhabitants of the lands was to be one of the objects of Portuguese policy". The main purpose of the Christian missionaries was to spread the message of the Gospel. However, their interest and devotion to Tamil did not end there. They translated many important literary works, wrote Tamil grammars, brought out science books and many research publication. All of these enriched Tamil language and encouraged more work on similar lines.

In Christian missionary records, there are many references to the Apostle St. Thomas who must have visited and done some missionary work in the beginning of the Christian era (Innasi, 1990: IV). Fr. Henry Henriques seems to be the first missionary in the sixteenth century, who is now considered the first European Tamil scholar (ibid 1990: 9). From then onwards, many missionaries from different nations like Italy, Portugal, Denmark, Scotland, England, Germany, United States, etc. came to Tamil Nadu to undertake missionary work.

The way the missionaries preached the Gospel could be understood from the plans of Robert de Nobili (cited in K. Meenakshi Sundaram 1974: 18), viz., "He openly dissociated himself from Fernandez, proclaiming that he was a Roman Brahmin. His original plan consisted of three features, viz. (1) The adaptation of the life of missionary to that of the people (the Brahmins), (2) The appropriation of harmless (Hindu) customs and ceremonies for Christian use, (3) Through

the study of the vernacular (and Sanskrit, the language of the sacred books of Hinduism), with a view to achieving fluency of speech and writing and accurate knowledge of the literature of the people.” Xavier (1998:300) mentions that French missionaries also followed the life style of locals.

So, the missionaries, irrespective of their European background, mingled with the people to spread Christianity. Tamil Christians write the names of the missionaries with the titles *ayyar* and *munivar*, which clearly indicates these missionaries’ Indian life style and their close identification with the local people. The title *ayyar* is the title by which the evangelical Christian priests or Protestant clergy are referred to. This reveals the influence of the prevailing Hindu Tamil-Sanskrit paradigm, wherein the high caste Hindu priest is called *Ayyar*. The word *ayyar* refers also to a leader.

The missionaries, both Roman Catholic and Protestant denominations, studied Tamil and contributed to the development of Tamil language and Tamil linguistics. Their works spread over four centuries, viz. the 16th to mid 20th century. They made prose as the dominant form of expression in the written language.

European Contributions

S.V. Shanmugam (1993: 10) classified missionary linguistic work into two types, namely, Religious work and Intellectual work. In order to refute the statement of Venkatasamy (1936: 15) that the missionaries had not done Tamil development work intentionally, Shanmugam mentions their contributions in the fields of Tamil religion, culture, history, etc.

Their religious works are of two kinds: (1) works relating to conversion of locals to Christianity and (2) works relating to helping their co-workers to do conversion. The translation of the Bible into Tamil and writing of Tamil grammars in other European languages fall under religious works.

We should recognize the fact that the missionaries’ love for Tamil and their dedication to its development went far beyond their missionary and religious considerations. Any attempt to narrowly define and characterize their impact on Tamil does not do justice to these servants of Tamil.

Translation as an Important Contribution

Translation as an explicit art is a great contribution of these missionaries. While translation and adaptation were done in the past for centuries, unfortunately we are not left with much record of this important process and technique. Moreover, translations into Tamil were often adaptations, an excellent strategy, especially when majority of the Tamils in the past were not bestowed with the freedom to learn Sanskrit. Literal translations bring out intricate issues of translation as a linguistic process. Through their multiple translations of the same text, and through their

steadfast dedication to make the translated text as close as possible to the original text, the missionaries brought into Tamil an important perspective. Often researchers fail to mention this great contribution of the missionaries to Tamil.

The missionaries' contribution to Tamil can be summarized as follows. The works cited here are not complete and exhaustive, but selective.

The first contribution of missionaries intended to spread Christianity is the translation of the Bible into Tamil. David Prabhakar (2002) elaborately discusses the styles followed in various Biblical translations, such as the ones by Ziegenbalg, Gabricius, Rhenius, Nobilie, Pawar, etc.

The Bilingual dictionaries can be considered as another important work done by the missionaries apart from the monolingual dictionary *caturakara:thi* by Beschi. They wrote bilingual/trilingual dictionaries in order to facilitate the other missionaries and coworkers to learn Tamil and to mingle with the local people. There are bilingual/trilingual dictionaries including languages like Latin, Portuguese, French, etc.

The following are worth mentioning:

Bilingual Dictionaries

Antem de Proence	-	<i>Tamil – Portuguese Dictionary</i>
Ziegenbalg's	-	<i>Tamil – Latin dictionary</i> <i>Latin – Latin Dictionary</i>
R-P Gury	-	<i>Tamil – Latin Dictionary</i>
Duby	-	<i>Tamoul – Francois Dictionary (1855)</i> <i>French – Tamil Dictionary (1895)</i>
<i>John Philip Fabricius</i>	-	<i>Malabar and English Dictionary</i>

One of the first French-Tamil Dictionaries was completed in Pondicherry by Fr. Dominique De valence. This contains 12,450 entries alphabetically changed with their Tamil equivalents.

There are also a few trilingual Dictionaries compiled by these missionaries:

Ziegenbalg	-	<i>Portuguese – Latin – Tamil</i> <i>Dictionary</i>
Duby	-	<i>Latin – François – Tamil Dictionary</i>

Another important area in which the Europeans contributed significantly is on Tamil Grammar. The grammars written by European missionaries could be classified as follows:

1. Grammars written in European languages like Latin, English, Dutch and French.

2. The Grammar written in Tamil.
3. Comparative Grammars.

S.V. Shanmugam (1994: 147) has also classified the missionary contributions on the grammatical side. The first grammar of Tamil Language by a foreigner now available is that of Rev. Philip Balde, a Dutch Missionary (cited in Meenakshi Sundaram 1961: 160). Ziegenbalg wrote a grammar in Latin and published it in 1761 under the title 'Grammatical Demulica'. Following this, grammars written by many missionaries during 18th and early 18th centuries came out.

Stephen Jeyaseelan (2001:21) pointed out that first grammar was attempted by Dr. Henrique Herriques on the model of the Latin and Greek grammar. He also cited grammars by Portuguese missionaries like Fr. Gasper da Aguilar, Fr. Balthessar de Casta during 17th Century.

Constantius Joseph Beschi:

*The grammar of common dialect of Tamil (in Latin).
A Grammar of High Dialect of Tamil Language (in Latin)"
Toonu: 1 vilakkam (Tamil)"*

J.P. Fabricius

A Grammar for learning the principles of the Malabar language, properly called Tamil or the Tamilian Language (English)

- Pryzirkyl - *Principia language Brahmanica (Czech)*
 Robert Anderson - *Rudiments of Tamil Grammar combining with the rules of Kodum Tamil or the ordinary dialect, an introduction to Shen Tamil or the elegant dialect of the language.*
 Rev Karl Graul - *Outline of Tamil Grammar*
 G.U. Pope - *A Hand book of the ordinary dialect of the Tamil language*
 - *A Larger grammar of the Tamil language in both its dialects.*
 C.T-C. Rhenuis - *A Grammar of the Tamil Language with an appendix.*
 Rb Robert Caldwell - *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages.*

There are also comparative grammars like Tamil-French grammar written by Louis Saviniene Dupis. Arokiasamy believes that before Robert Caldwell wrote his monumental work about the comparative grammar of Dravidian languages, a French man called Milliett had evolved one" (Cited in Meenakshi Sundaram, P-13).

A very important dimension of European contribution to Tamil is their creative writings in Tamil. They chose Indian and religious themes and wrote creative pieces in a style and manner

which was very distinctive. The following are a few examples of such creative writings.

Beschi - *Tempa : Vani, Tirukka:valu:r Kalampakam*
- *Parama : tta Kuru Kataikal*
- *Ve: ta vilakkam, ve:tir olukkam, etc.*

Dupuis - *Ve: ta tarkkam, te :va cine : ka muyarci, turavara utayanam illara uttayam, etc.*

The Christian missionaries also embarked on translating some of the precious native literature into the western languages, adding to the dimension of Biblical translation. T.P. Meenakshi Sundaram (1957 – i) states that “the study of Tamil language, inspired them to give the best of their knowledge to their countrymen in their translation of Tamil classics.”

They also translated Biblical literature into Tamil. Robert de Nobili’s *na:na:pate:sam, A;tuma nirnayam, mantira viya:kkiya:nam* and *Tiviya ma: tirikai* may be mentioned here.

J.P. Fabricius translated the prayer book into Tamil under the caption *Pira:rattanai Pustakam*.

Rhenius translated several works into Tamil, viz. *Na:na:pate.sam vina:vitaiVe:tasa:stiracurukkam* and *mo:tca ma:rkka*.

L.Spaulding translated John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* into Tamil in 1853.

S. Winfred translated the songs of David as *ta:vi:tarasan amma:nai* in 1885 (Balakrishnan 2002: 29-30)

Many Tamil works were rendered into Latin, French, Spanish, German and English. A few of the translations rendered up to the 19th century are listed below:

H.Stokes - *Ni: tineri vilakkam (1830)*
Charles Graul - *Kaivalyanavanita Ca, vendanta poem, German (1853)*
Karl Graul - Der Kural des Tiruvalluvar (1856)
Charles Graul - Kural (Tamil and Latin (1865)
T. Foulkes - Cacivarnapo : tam (German 1861 Civa praka:sa Kattalai German 1863)
P. Percival - Avvaiyar’s Apharisms (1870)
G.U. Pope - Kural (English 1886)

French missionaries did mostly translation work of Tamil literature into French.

Barrique de Fontaineiw - *Thirukural*

Abbe Dubois - *Pancatamtirams, Parama :rtta kurukakai*

Apart from the translation of literature, they also brought out books on science, medicine and other informative literature. The following are a few chosen examples:

Rhenius	- <i>Pu : mi sa: stiram</i> (English to Tamil 1882)
B. Schminnal	- <i>Ulaka Caritir ma:lai</i> (History, English to Tamil 1830)
William Robertson	- <i>Nu:tana viva sayam</i> (Agriculture, 1843)
L. Theron	- <i>Science book on Stream and the Stream Engine</i> (1868)
Sonnerak	- <i>Tamil alphabet system</i> (1806 French)
La flote	- <i>Travaloque (payana tinacari</i> 1769 French)
Foucher d'obson ville	- <i>Flora and Fauna of Tamil land</i> (1783)

The translations, which came up during the 19th century, were plenty in English and French.

Paradigm Shift

From a comparative study of overall contributions of Europeans and the status of the Tamil language before 17 & 18th centuries, we could suggest certain shifts in the developmental Paradigm of Tamil. The shifts relate to the form and content of Tamil and attitudes of the people. These three constitute the Paradigm of Tamil.

At the form level, the phonology, script, grammar, arrangement of words and styles and structure of Tamil shifted to a new Paradigm due to the impact of European scholars. At the content level also, Tamil assumed different functions and expressed new contents, which were not there before the European contact. The European impact also brought changes in the values of Tamil attitudes of Tamils towards their language. We shall discuss these shifts one by one.

Shifts in the Script

The earliest written evidence for the Tamil script goes back to the third century BC. The form of writing is called Tamil-Brahmi, evidently a variety of Brahmi script used in the subcontinent. The Tamil Brahmi script underwent changes and took shape similar to the modern Tamil script.

During the period of *Tolkappiyam*, the vowel letters e, o were written with dots to differentiate long and short vowels. The placement of dot over the vowels and vowel combination indicated them to be short forms. Similarly, the forms Kurriyalikaram, Kurriyalukaram, ie., the phonetic values of i, u, were also indicated by dots.

The first paradigm shift with respect to script occurred when Beschi made certain modification in the script. He removed the dot over the vowels and vowel combinations and introduced minor changes, which had major consequences. Beschi in his book on Kotun Tamil described how he brought about a change in the secondary symbol of e, o, vowel combination. To denote the length or to differentiate the short from long, he used two secondary symbols o, N.

Another change that he introduced was to replace the dot over the vowels with – the symbol to denote length markers. This is the marker used in linguistics to denote length even today. These changes added new dimensions to palm-leaf writing. This reform in the script by Beschi led to further reforms in the modern period to suit the printing and typewriting technology.

At the phonetic level also Europeans were the pioneers to describe the phonetic value of the letters. Most of the grammars written by Europeans discuss the phonetic value of the Tamil graphemes. Even though modern Tamil linguists describe the phonetic values of the letters now-a-days, Europeans began this practice. Note, however, there are attempts in this direction even in Tamil. However, traditional Tamil grammarians did not elaborate on these aspects (probably because they were writing to an audience of native speakers for whom this knowledge is inherent) .

Beschi and Rhenius compared Tamil sound system with the sound system of other languages like Latin, German and Portuguese. This comparative study revealed the peculiarities and different pronunciations which existed in Tamil.

Although Tamil and Sanskrit were compared and thus comparative statements were made in traditional Tamil grammars by traditional Tamil and Sanskrit scholars, the tenor of such statements somehow muffled the differences in several aspects. Furthermore, the focus was more on borrowing, especially with the assumption that Tamil was the main borrower. As Sanskritized pronunciation carried great prestige, differences within Tamil phonology and its impact on the letters of the script did not receive much critical attention.

Another important graphemic change was the evidence of conjunct consonants especially in the case of germinated consonants such as TT, tt, etc. These consonants together with the following vowels were form early written as one letter. The introduction of printing press and the practice of writing letters separately in Europe modified the Tamil graphemic system.

The European printing technology effected many changes in the form and function of Tamil. Papers and books would have been still unknown, had the printing press not found its way to India. Due to the impact of the printing press, large numbers of copies were made later. Most of the works in Tamil were in manuscript form. No two manuscripts were identical and making multiple copies was difficult and time consuming.

Shifts in Style

Apart from the phonological level, there were also shifts in the styles of writing Tamil, Tamil words were not spaced when written. Several words were joined together and written as one large single word. The missionaries began to introduce changes in the manner of writing. In order to understand the meaning of the words clearly, they gave space between words. It is worth mentioning that in the olden days, there was no established practice of using punctuations in

Tamil. The Europeans introduced punctuations in Tamil.

However, it should also be noted here that punctuation continues to be a big problem in writing modern Tamil also. Adequate practice is not given to students in this regard. Moreover there is no established convention of punctuation; practices vary from one individual to another, although there may be common agreement on certain aspects of punctuation.

Another style change was the specific mention of the authorship of a written work. The authorship of a work was usually omitted and, in several cases, the original work was never obtained. We had to be satisfied with the commentary only. Authorship of some literary works of the past is disputed. The Europeans had the system of mentioning the names of author/s numerous references in their works and for comparative purposes they also listed authors and titles. The authorship and citing references, etc. were systematically followed by the European missionaries due to this practice in Europe (K. Meenakshi Sundaram 1982).

The credit for the script reform and the introduction of punctuation marks including space between words should go to European missionaries. According to Annamalai (1980 :4) these two innovations helped greatly to simplify the task of reading by eliminating reflection and back-tracking and thus increasing speed and comprehension.

Shifts in Tamil Grammar

Tamil language had already got a great grammatical tradition. The European scholars wrote grammars in their languages like Latin, French, English, etc., to meet certain specific purposes.

S.V. Shanmugan (1994: 146) classified these grammars under three major heads:

1. Descriptive grammars,
2. Comparative Grammars which dealt with the comparison of the genetically related languages and the reconstruction of Proto languages and
3. Comparative study of grammars which dealt with the comparison of grammars of languages belonging to two different periods.

S. V. Shanmugam is of the opinion that the last two areas of research introduced by the European missionaries are new to Tamil.

It should, however, be mentioned that the nature and function of traditional “descriptive” grammars in Tamil is different from the modern linguistically oriented descriptive grammars. Traditional “descriptive grammars” are also different from the type of descriptive grammars written by the European missionaries.

All the Tamil grammars written in European languages may be considered as pedagogical grammars because they were written for the specific purpose of language learning. This is yet

another aspect of the paradigm where the native grammars were both descriptive and prescriptive.

In the descriptive study of grammar also, the western impact paved the way for the theoretical improvement in the description of the conjugational class. Shanmugam (ibid: 147) identified points of grammar which the Tamil traditional grammar did not notice.

1. Classification of nouns on the basis of variant of empty morphs (declensional class) and the classification of verbs on the basis of the allomorph of the tense suffixes, and verbal participial (conjugational class) were first noticed by the grammars written by Europeans.
2. Classification of pronoun as a subclass of nouns is found in these grammars whereas the native grammars grouped the pronouns as part of common noun.
3. New structural facts about Tamil Language have been observed by these European missionaries, based on the insight they had derived from European classical languages and from the emergence science of linguistics in Europe.

With regard to the grammar written by Europeans in Tamil such as *tonnu:l vilakkam*, Shanmugam (ibid :157) stated that this grammar “has shown many new insights in the organisation of the phonology and grammar. Really it is nearer to the modern descriptive linguistics than to the native Tamil grammar. In more than one way, it has anticipated the birth of the descriptive linguistics in this century”.

The comparative-historical linguistics, yet another aspect of grammar paradigm, was introduced into India by European scholars. Robert Caldwell’s *Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages* was the first comparative grammar for the Indian languages. Indian linguistic study got a boost when William Jones in 1786 declared the genetic relationship between Sanskrit and many European languages.

This resulted in the birth of comparative-historical study, which was vigorous in Europe. This gave importance to the study of Sanskrit (Shanmugam 2000: 20). But the main contribution of Caldwell’s book is the discovery that South Indian languages are not genetically related to Sanskrit. This was the common prevalent opinion among the European and Indian Scholars. As for the Tamil language, this aspect of paradigm shift aided the foundation for many social and political awakenings in Tamil Nadu.

Shift in the Style and Prose

The important shift in the aspect of form in Tamil is the shift from the use of verse as the main medium of written expression to prose form. There were many commentaries written in prose but these were just commentaries. There were several original prose works to deal with religious philosophy. However, poetry was the primary form of written expression for most part of the

recorded history of Tamil. Practically there were no Tamil prose books in Tamil on ordinary and day to day subjects before the advent of Europeans. Books on literature, medicine, astrology and astronomy were written in poetic Tamil, which could be understood by the elites only.

Thus, though there was the prose form, it was restricted to commentaries in the early period. It was not developed as a separate genre in Tamil Literary tradition. Sakthivel observes (1987:88) that there existed three styles of prose before European contact. They were 1. Commentator's Style 2. maniprava : la Style 3. Epigraphical style.

The missionaries found that Tamil poetry and literary writings were not intelligible to large number of people. Tamil was, of course, dominant in the oral domain as bilingualism was restricted to the elites only. The written tradition supported continued use of poetry for all purposes.

The establishment of printing press and publication of series of books and pamphlets in Tamil to disseminate Christian doctrines among the people, shifted the trend in written tradition and contributed to the use of prose instead of poetry. The missionaries like Nobile and Beschi wrote books both in verse and prose forms. Beschi's books, viz., te ; mpe: vani, tirukka:valu: r, Amma : nai, Caturakara : ti are in verse form.

The style followed by Europeans in prose writing is totally different from the earlier styles. Since their aim was to present the Gospel to everyone, both highly educated and simple literates, Christianity, they adopted a style close to the colloquial Tamil. The verse style was the symbol of high caste and educated people at that time. Introduction of prose style and propagation of education among the down-trodden shattered the symbolic function of the nexus between education and poetic form and thus created a shift in the paradigm.

Creative Literature by European Missionaries

The Europeans used Tamil for religious purpose, but also added a new dimension to Tamil by their creative works like short stories, articles, etc. They also contributed to the development of modern dictionaries and translations, which were new to Tamil.

The translation is clearly a new diversion. The Europeans translated the Tamil literary works into other languages and thus propagated the richness of Tamil. They also brought in new contents from other sources through translation such as science, medicine and other informative literature.

Dictionaries are a rich addition to Tamil development due to European impact. The Tamil Nighandus used metrical tradition and were of use to those who composed verse. The modern feature of the dictionary is the alphabetical arrangement of words and the use of graphic cues for the retrieval of meanings. The modern dictionaries are used by all sections of people as reference materials. The contribution by Europeans followed this alphabetic system which was new to Tamil Tradition. The bilingual and trilingual dictionaries mentioned were also a new trend set by

the Europeans.

Travelogues and recording the events of daily happenings in a diary form are also a valuable gift from the Europeans. The diary tradition was known to sailors and missionary officials. The habit of maintaining private diaries was adopted by the natives who came in close contact with these people. Emulating this European practice, diaries came into existence in Tamil. Jeyaseelan Stephen (2000: xi) mentions that Guruvappa Pillai happens to be the first known diary author in Pondicherry. There are also diaries maintained by Rangapillai and Thiruvankadam Pillai which are considered to be a new dimension of Tamil development. These diaries reveal the ways of life of the times of the authors. For a society which did not develop or encourage the practice of keeping written historical records, introduction of the diary-writing tradition is a great blessing.

Shifts in the Attitudes

So far we have seen the paradigm shift in the structure, form and development aspect of Tamil. The scientific approach of Europeans created a new awareness among Tamils. There were certain attitudes among the scholars and people of that period:

1. The thought that Sanskrit was the only superior language and that Tamil depends on Sanskrit for its existence, development and proper usage.
2. Between the two varieties of Tamil, spoken and written varieties, the written variety was given a superior status and the spoken variety was considered inferior.
3. Literature was meant for the elites and poetic form is *the* form of literature.

The contribution of European scholars shattered all these assumptions and attitudes. Several traditional Tamil grammars, for example, *Tolkappiyam*, clearly state the fact that Tamil is distinct from Sanskrit. However, it was only after Caldwell's contribution, that the native and other scholars became more conscious of this fact that Tamil was not genetically related to Sanskrit. It had its own independent existence. Each and every European scholar had registered their opinion about the richness of Tamil language and literature.

These authentic and systematic analyses not only brought shifts in the attitude but also paved way for the creation of new attitudes. The later scholars and purists, taking cues from these writings, elevated Tamil to such heights that it is the mother of all world languages. Even though Caldwell has praised Tamil for its antiquity and richness of lexicon, he never equated Tamil with proto-Dravidian (Shanmugam 1994: 146).

The diglossic nature of Tamil was clearly identified by the European scholars, even before the systematic analysis of diglossia in languages around the world began in the second half of the 20th century.

The long literary tradition Tamil recognized created two types of varieties. Among the varieties, literature was written in High Tamil and the spoken variety was always looked down upon since it contained social and regional dialects. Every written form was associated with verse and the elite. It was only after the European contribution, these attitudes changed.

The missionaries adopted a separate style, which was in between literary and spoken Tamil. They printed many books. Beschi had written grammar for spoken Tamil which gave new status to spoken variety. Though he has written grammar for spoken Tamil, the title of the book called 'Kotuntamil' shows the attitude prevalent in those days.

Modern linguistics gives importance to the spoken variety because of its vitality and historicity. Writing of grammars for spoken Tamil had some specific purpose but it created a shift in the attitude of the people. By adopting prose style, using colloquial form, simplifying Tamil sandhi, etc, the European missionaries had freed Tamil from the clutches of the elite and hence set a trend for a new paradigm.

Conclusion

The comparative study of the development of Tamil during the period from the 18th to the 20th century provides many new insights. Though the 20th century Tamil development is due to western/global impact, there are certain social forces and social changes like industrialization, free trade explosion, etc., that lay behind the development. The main emphasis of this period is to adopt Tamil for new domains of activity and shape Tamil to meet the needs of technology and globalization. These developments are done by the natives for the benefit of the Tamil society.

The earlier Tamil development was mostly refining and structuring Tamil, and identifying the uniqueness of Tamil. Through the technological development the European missionaries brought in, they re-structured the form of Tamil. The intellectual developments of European nations also helped to systematize Tamil. When the Europeans studied Tamil, they could identify the uniqueness of Tamil.

Their main aim was to present the Gospel of Christianity to all and they used Tamil as a tool for it. They refined the tool with their intellectual and technological background. The fact that most of these missionaries did not know Tamil before they entered Tamilnadu enabled them to look at Tamil and its domains of use with many innovative ideas and practices. They began with their own need to have adequate tools to learn this ancient language. This resulted in their abiding gifts to Tamil in so many ways: the adoption of prose style, adoption of colloquial form and making dictionaries and so on. They also opened for the entry of processes for social, cultural and political transformation of Tamils. If we take into account the long rich literary tradition, their contributions were only for a short duration, but these contributions took Tamil to greater heights. They were the path breakers for the new development paradigm.

Chapter 4

Multilingualism and Second Language Acquisition/Learning in Pondicherry

A Speculative Discussion and Illustration of Issues

The Government of Pondicherry has issued an order, offering a facility to learn Tamil to all the students of different mother tongue background in schools up to eighth standard. It is a tactical move by the Government asking all to learn Tamil, though Tamil is not made a compulsory language in the school curriculum. The government also published a book entitled 'Arimukat Tamil' (Introductory Tamil) to facilitate the implementation of the said order.

This Order is not implemented now. However, I would like to take up this issue and discuss how in a multilingual context language policies may be constrained by the existing socio-political and linguistic situations. Remember that the analysis presented here is based on an Order which is not being implemented now. So, suggestions and analyses presented here have become more or less speculation, while offering an excellent perspective on multilingual politics, purism, and language planning.

Questions

In this context, there arise a number of pertinent questions, like the following, with regard to language and its implementation in schools in Pondicherry.

- a) What is the sociolinguistic context that warranted the Government to issue this order?
- b) Will it be possible for a student to complete his studies without learning the official language of the region?
- c) What would be the likely consequence of this order on the existing educational policy of the state?
- d) As per the school curriculum, in general, English is learned as second language and mother tongue is learned as the first language. Is Tamil is going to be the third language for the students whose mother tongue is Tamil or not?
- e) What is the implementation policy of the government with regard to this order? (The original year was 2003.) The government introduced a single book for all the students studying from I to VIII Standard Are they going to change the book on the basis of the syllabus, if any framed?

The Multilingual Situation in Pondicherry

In order to understand these questions, one has to know the multilingual situation and the language use in education, administration in Pondicherry. It is a fact that Indian states are reorganized on the basis of the dominant language identity in 1956. In spite of this reorganization of the Indian states on linguistic basis, every state has some minority languages. In the case of Pondicherry, the language situation is peculiar. As mentioned in chapter 1, 55 languages were returned as the mother tongue of the population in the 1961 census. The thirtieth report of the commission for linguistic minorities in India also has the information about the languages spoken in Pondicherry: Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Urdu, Bengali, Kashmiri, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi and Sindhi under major and minimal language categories.

Existence and maintenance of diversity, whether cultural, linguistic, religious or ethnicity, has always been a part of Indian Tradition. In Pondicherry, the multilingual setup has reasons for its existence. The major factor for the multilingualism in Pondicherry is the geographical discontinuity of the territory¹. There are also some socio-political and historical reasons for the existence of multilingualism². Apart from this, the existence of Sri Aurobindo Ashram and the Auroville, the international city, attracted many Indians and foreigners to Pondicherry.

Complex Language Policy Reflecting Complex Linguistic Situation

Taking these facts into consideration, the official language policies are framed in Pondicherry. The language used for official purposes are also very distinct from other states. Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, English and French are reorganized for official purpose as per the official language policy³.

Even though the Union Territory has an official language policy, it did not have a distinct education policy of its own until this order is given. Due to geographical distribution of its various parts, the Territory adopts the policies of the adjacent major states. As for school education is concerned, the territory is considered as part of the respective states, such as Tamilnadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. The examination is also conducted by these states for the students of Pondicherry.

Hence Pondicherry Union Territory has two different policies with respect to language education:

- i) Three language formula as adopted in Kerala and Andhra Pradesh for Mahe and Yanam regions respectively.
- ii) Two language formula in Pondicherry and Karaikal as adopted by Tamilnadu.

Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam are studied as first language in the respective regions. English is the second language. Mahe and Yanam have Hindi from V standards irrespective of medium of instruction.

Complex Language Education

The language education in urban Pondicherry is complex and unique. There are many languages such as Tamil, French, Hindi and Sanskrit being taught. The number of languages introduced and the manner of introduction such as optionally or compulsory, level of introduction vary from school to school. The interesting situation in Pondicherry is that, Tamil, Hindi and French are being taught as first language in school curriculum. One can select any one of these languages in schools and even change the first language opted at the secondary and Higher secondary stages.

The Place of French

The French ruled Pondicherry for more than two centuries. At the time of independence from French rule, an option was sought from the people for French citizenship. Many opted for French citizenship and since then they have been living both in Pondicherry and France. Hence, the government of Pondicherry introduced French as the first language in school curriculum. The government also started French medium schools in Pondicherry, Karaikal and Villianur.

Apart from the government schools, the French government also has a school called Liscey Francaise in Pondicherry. In this school, the second language is English and Tamil/German/Spanish are being introduced as third language. In the government sponsored French medium schools, English is being taught as a subject but Tamil is not at all introduced even as a subject.

Urban Pondicherry and the Rationale for the Government Order to Teach Tamil

It is to be noted that in urban Pondicherry, no school offers Telugu (or) Malayalam language. Families who have migrated from Mahe (or) Yanam prefer Hindi as first language rather than Tamil to their children. Because of the existence of significant number of Hindi bilinguals and also to facilitate the children of Central Government employees, Hindi has been introduced as first language in Pondicherry. Most of the Private English Medium schools offer Tamil, Hindi, French as first language. The situation is such that even without learning the dominant language Tamil, a child can complete its school education. Hence, the government of Pondicherry issued the order offering facility to learn Tamil language up to 8th standard.

Increase in Language Burden for the Students of Certain Categories

This order, if made compulsory, would demand that all students learn Tamil thereby would create a parity among students. In a situation where only a two-language formula is implemented, this order creates a handicap for those students whose mother tongue is not Tamil.

For example, in Mahe and Yanam regions, three language formula is being adopted. Because of this order, the students who have opted for Hindi/French, have to study Tamil additionally. That means, these students have to study mother tongue, English and Tamil whereas in the schools in Pondicherry where a two-language formula is in force, the Tamil mother tongue students are required to study only two languages, that is, Tamil and English.

Sequencing Languages to Avoid Additional Load

There is no second opinion that the language of the state should be studied for integration and administrative convenience. That is why the Government has indirectly introduced this order. Instead of this, Tamil can be made compulsory up to fifth standard and from VI standard onwards, students may be permitted to opt for either Hindi or French. It is also observed from the students that the reason for opting for Hindi/French is to score higher marks in the examination. We also need to scrutinize why scoring higher marks is easier in these languages.

Differences in the Learning Processes of Various Languages

The languages like Hindi and French are more easily learned in the multilingual set up but the acquisition and learning of Tamil is different.

The acquisition pattern of Tamil language is different in the sense that the form of language acquired in day-to-day living is not taught in the schools. This is due to the diglossic nature of Tamil. But the interesting acquisition pattern in Pondicherry is the acquisition of Hindi. In general, a language can be acquired only in the dominant language situation. Hindi is not the dominant language in Pondicherry, but the multilingual set up has made it possible. The form of Hindi students learn in day-to-day living is rather close to the form of Hindi in the schools. Of course, lexical choice poses some problems, in addition to the grammar gender.

A survey conducted by the Pondicherry Institute of Linguistics and culture in collaboration with the Central Institute of Indian Languages on language use patterns also confirms that Hindi can be acquired in the neighborhood and work place domains. This may be one reason for other tongue children to choose Hindi as first language when it is offered in schools. Additionally, lexical items do exhibit some similarity between languages such as Hindi, Gujarati, and Bengali. This creates an impression that learning Hindi is easier and quicker. There is also a general overall pattern of loyalty: Speakers of Indo-Aryan languages, when given an option to learn a South Indian language or Hindi, generally opt for learning Hindi. There are also communities and families or castes among Tamils who would prefer to learn Hindi on the assumption that they already know Tamil and that Hindi is gateway to jobs in “northern” states. They tend to define loyalty to their mother tongue from certain ideological angles, which enable them to prefer other languages than Tamil for study and use. This is a very complex issue.

Making the Learning of a Second Language Easier!

As already stated, in the case of Hindi, the students will learn what they acquire. There are a few studies which state that the order and manner of acquisition of the mother tongue may influence the learning/acquisition of a second language. There are also studies which state that the learning of a second language does not involve the transfer of structures from the first language, but rather it involves what is called creative construction (Dulay & Burt 1974).

This means that the process of acquiring a second language is controlled primarily by universal cognitive principles that determine how learner would approach the language regardless of previous knowledge. Krashen (1982) claims that the similarities reflected a common underlying process define *acquisition*, which is responsible for the bulk of second language acquisition in any context. He further claims that unconscious acquired knowledge of target language is responsible for normal SL performance (cited in Beebee 1988:166)

A language such as Tamil may be acquired by school children from non-Tamil language groups in Pondicherry both in the school environment and the neighborhood environment. The acquisition of Tamil in school environment is not possible since most of the English medium schools do not encourage students talking in Tamil. Even if these students acquire a variety of Tamil either in school or neighborhood, that variety will not be similar to the variety they learn at school. Apart from this situation, loyalty and motivation exhibited by the families of children that help or hamper learning Tamil are also important factors.

The Tamil Textbook Introducing Tamil to Non-Tamil Speaking Students

In this context, the book entitled ‘Arimukat Tamil’ introduced by the government of Pondicherry to facilitate Tamil learning can be analyzed. This book is suggested for all the students from 1st standard to 8th standard from the year 2003. This contains lessons on the script, morals, and a few songs. From the content of the book, one can infer that it aims to teach the written/literary variety of Tamil.

It is mentioned earlier that Tamil is a diglossic language. The very nature of the diglossic situation in Tamil demands teaching/learning of both the written and spoken varieties in the context of second language teaching/learning. Even though the acquisition of spoken variety will be helpful for day-to-day conversation, the spoken variety is not at all encouraged in the learning situation.

The Primary Choice and Purpose: Which One to Teach First?

Hence, the primary issue is not the choice between the two varieties but how to introduce both. The strategy to teach Tamil beginning with spoken Tamil has been preferred by a few scholars (Kumarasamy Raja 1966, Rajaram 1979, Shanmugam Pillai 1965). This is based on the fact that Tamil is acquired by the native children in this order.

There is another group of linguists who prefer written form to be introduced first to the second language learners (Annamalai,1980, Gnanasundaram,1980, Kothandaraman 1975). They have the following reasons for their preference.

- 1) The written form is more basic than any other dialect for deriving the various dialectal forms.
- 2) Even if the student fails to master the spoken language, he will be able to read and write and this will be understood by most people.

There are also scholars who favor the simultaneous introduction of both written and spoken varieties (Ramasamy, 2002)

Methods

These types of differentiations were suggested for the students, who study Tamil as foreign language. The goals, methods, and materials are duly differentiated when western models of educational process are followed. Hence grammar translation, and/or structural and communicative methods are followed.

The traditional language education in India does not make a distinction in methods, materials, etc. Teaching a language in traditional methodology is teaching a few poetry and prose pieces. The book published by the government of Pondicherry typically follows the traditional methodology. This book is acceptable in the situation where the spoken variety is already acquired and the written variety is being learned in the school. The needs of those students whose mother tongue is not Tamil are very different from those of the students whose mother tongue or the language of early childhood experience is Tamil. Pondicherry Introductory Tamil textbook fails to meet their needs.

The Present Situation

As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, the Order is not implemented now. So, the situation is somewhat different from originally intended by the government.

The Government of Pondicherry had been adopting the text books published by the Government of Tamilnadu for teaching Tamil, as first language. For a brief period, the government produced its own book, which did not differentiate between first or second language materials. This attempt has also not been pursued at this moment.

Once again, the textbooks from Tamilnadu are adopted.

The changes contemplated and adopted and then finally not implemented offer us an insight into the complexity of language planning in a multilingual set up.

Chapter 5

Puristic Idiom: The Case of Tamil

The Nature of the Act of Purism and Purification

Purification is an important activity that many languages undergo in the process of standardization.

The basis for the act of purism may either be socio-political or linguistic or both. Every correction act directed towards language materials has some overt as well as covert ideologies. Most of the purification acts are more of political in nature. Linguistic tokens are exploited to implement underlying ideology/ideologies.

The act of purification involves removal and replacement of not only the foreign language elements, but also dialectal or social varieties. Depending on the nature of the contacting language items, purification process is advocated in languages.

Definitions of Purism

Hence, there have been many definitions of purism in the literature focusing on different aspects of it. Much significance is attached towards the source of enriching language after replacement of loan words. Wexler (1974), Auty (1973), and Moskow (1991) have given many definitions on linguistic aspects of purism.

Newstupy (1979) has identified three related but distinct types of purism by including linguistic and political aspects. They are

- 1) Discourse purism
- 2) Puristic idiom
- 3) Ideologies of purism.

Discourse purism can be used with regard to the set of language correction acts which are employed to remove certain undesirable segments of speech act. This can be effected without speaking about it.

The puristic idiom refers to ways of communicating the purification process. The reasons for considering certain elements such as loan words or dialectal words or neologism as undesirable and ways of communicating the correction process are defined as puristic idiom.

The ideologies of purism are normally reflected in the puristic idiom. An attempt is made in this

paper to study the patristic idiom in Tamil society at two different periods.

Situation in Tamil

The term *tani-t-tamil* 'pure Tamil' was first used by Swaminatha Desiker (18th century) but he used it in the negative sense, implying that there was no such thing as pure Tamil (Ilankumaran 1986:21).

The Pure Tamil Movement was initiated by Maraimalai Adigal in 1916. The influence of Sanskrit as a language of religion, philosophy, etc., over Tamil was high at one time. The social and historical backgrounds of the genesis of Pure Tamil Movement were elaborately studied by Annamalai (1979), Ilankumaran (1989), Saratha Nambi Aruran (1992), Kothandaraman (1996) and Ramamoorthy (1997).

It is generally observable that the attitude of preserving the purity of Tamil has been there since the period of Tolkappiyar, the earliest Tamil grammarian. During the initial period of the modern movement, the puristic idiom was that indiscriminate use of Sanskrit and other foreign words had put to disuse elegant, effective and common words, destroyed the sweetness, fertility and purity of Tamil, created an impression that Tamil cannot function independently (Adigal, 1919:18).

There had also been argument against the use of Pure Tamil saying that the pure Tamil words are limited in number and kinds, and all thoughts could not be expressed using only these words. Purism was even criticised as a retrograde step comparable to the civilized person becoming a savage (Vaiyapuri Pillai).

Advocating the use of Pure Tamil, Adigal eliminated all the Sanskrit expressions which had been used even by himself in his earlier texts. The Sanskrit expressions were replaced by going back to old literary and inscriptional sources and by coining new words with native roots.

The process of elimination includes proper names, personal as well as place names. Maraimalai Adigal was however aware that it would be impossible for Tamil to discard the non-Tamil influence completely.

Kothandaraman (1996; 150), quoting from the Mullaip pa:ttu a:raycciyurai of Adigal, stated that Adigal was particularly convinced that English could contribute much to the enrichment of Tamil. This statement is valid only if the contribution be taken at the level of models for enrichment and not the language itself. But it was his intention not to use Sanskrit in Tamil writing to the extent possible, but admitted the inevitability of using Sanskrit and other language materials, wherever they were found to be indispensable.

But Devaneyya Pavanar, a follower of Adigal and a great Tamil scholar in his own right, had extreme views on the origin of Tamil and its relation to Sanskrit. His love for Tamil was such

that he could not tolerate even the use of widely accepted Sanskrit expressions.

Characterizing Tamil Purism

Tamil Purism can be categorised as x-phonetic, i.e., directed at material from a specific language, namely, Sanskrit. Even though at the surface level it was directed at all foreign elements, Sanskrit loans were the main target for Tamil Purism.

Generally speaking, there is a tendency to use the words of Tamil origin in preference to the words of Sanskrit origin that may be in use in the spoken variety. Elimination of Sanskrit words and using Tamil words in their place is quite common. This zeal is rather muffled when English words are used in Tamil.

English and Sanskrit languages are the two dominant languages that stood as tokens or signs of intellectual attainments among the Tamils in the recent past. While no such function is now assigned to the use and knowledge of Sanskrit, English still continues to perform this function in the Tamil society. Sanskrit is perceived to be the language of Brahmins for several reasons. The predominant presence of the Brahmins in civil and business services was seen to be restricting the entry of non-Brahmins into these domains.

The extraordinary zeal for Sanskrit among the Brahmins and their early reluctance to teach Sanskrit to non-Brahmins reason also contributed to the perception that Sanskrit is the language of the Brahmins. There are several other reasons but we will deal with these here. I must, however, point out that the zeal for the manipravala style among the Brahmins and some elitist sections of the non-Brahmin communities among the Tamils in certain religious works was an important reason that gave birth to the tendency to eliminate Sanskrit words from Tamil writings that resulted in this perception.

The Goals of Tamil Purism

The most important puristic idiom of the Tamil is to show the independence and richness of Tamil. Ample evidences were put forward from different sources to assert the distinctiveness and independence of Tamil language, literature and culture. Robert Caldwell, (1856) in his “Comparative Grammar of Dravidian languages” proved that Tamil was genetically unrelated to Sanskrit. A large number of the manuscripts of Tamil literary works of the past were discovered and printed. They gave not only concrete proof to the antiquity of Tamil language but also clearly revealed the independence of Tamil from Sanskrit.

Use of Attributes to Tamil as Evidence of Pristine Purity

The attributes used by Tamil poets to describe the Tamil language are often quoted by the purists to point out the superiority of Tamil. The following are some of the attributes of Tamil:

1. *paintamil* – green Tamil, ‘ever green because of its conservative character’
2. *kannittamil* – virgin Tamil ‘no drastic change in the structure’
3. *c:rilamai tamil* – beautiful Tamil ‘youthfulness’
4. *vantamil* – fertile Tamil ‘vastness and richness of Tamil lexicon’
5. *centamil* – perfect of cultivated Tamil.
6. *tonmoli* – antiquated language.
7. *tintamil* – sweet Tamil.

There is also an attribute like *kotuntamil* which implies the uncultivated variety of Tamil with the mixture of the colloquial, dialectal, and borrowed words. These attributes and other types have been used in Tamil literature to highlight the highly cultivated status of the language. Tamil Purists used these to emphasize the pristine nature of Tamil language.

Targets of Purist Movement

As in the case of the earlier periods, the puristic idiom of present day activities also has some targets and motives. At present, the movement for purification of language has lost its steam. The slow in momentum is also due to the fact that the goals of this Movement are part of the accepted tenor of Tamil use. There are also very committed and radical and activist-purists, who propagate their views vigorously in Pondicherry. The intensity of their activities is less and the activities are more or less confined to organizing literary meets and occasionally public demonstrations.

A Descriptive List of Pure Tamil Organizations

We notice the following organisations in Pondicherry from the pamphlets distributed by them.

- i) *anaittulaka tanittamil munnerrakazhakam*
(Transworld Pure Tamil Promotion Party)
- ii) *anaittulaka tanittamil valarcci niruvanam*
(Transworld Institute for the Development of Pure Tamil)
- iii) *putu tamil panpa:ttu puratchi iyakkam*
(Revolutionary Movement for New Tamil Culture)
- iv) *tamil Ka:val patai*
(Tamil Protection Force)
- e) *tamilinap pa:tuka:ppu Ku:ttamaippu*
(Tamil Race Protection Federation)
- f) *tamil valarci natavatikkai Kulu*
(Action Committee for the Growth of Tamil)

g) *tanit tamil iyakkam*
(Pure Tamil Movement)

Most of the above mentioned organisations propagate their views through short notices and pamphlets. The content of such notices and pamphlets projects these organisations as functioning systematically to create awareness for the use and development of Pure Tamil among the public. Their goals are clearly understood in the descriptive names of these organizations.

The Anti-English Posture of Present-day Purist Movement

The present-day Purists focus their attention also on English unlike in the past. English is seen to reduce, and will ultimately subordinate and eliminate, the use of Tamil as the dominant medium of expression among the Tamils. The goal of these organisations is to promote the unity among Tamils through language use and identity.

There are new attributes such as *teli tamil* “clear tamil” *putu tamil* “new tamil” *aruntamil* “rare tamil” *tu:ya tamil* “pure tamil” etc are used now. There are certain slogans as given below, which exemplify their activities.

a:nkilattai o:lippa:m “(We will) avoid using English.”
aruntamilai valarppo:m ““(We will) promote Tamil, which is precious.”
tamilar orrumai o:nkuka “Let the unity of Tamils increase!”
tamilar orumaippa:tu o:nkuka “Let the unity of Tamils increase!”

The above idioms show the ideology of these organisations. There were arguments put forward against Pure Tamil movement that the activities would make Tamil parochial, narrow minded, etc. But the slogans like ‘Be a world citizen and purchase world commodities’ are articulated to show that their organisation is not parochial. The co-ordination of Tamil community through the development of Pure Tamil is a new agenda of the present-day purist.

The ‘Revolutionary Movement for Tamil Culture’ strongly criticizes the use of English by people through notices. The slogans against English are framed on the pattern of the slogans adopted by early Rationalist Dravidian groups which questioned the existence of God. The purists replaced the word ‘God’ with English as follow.

A:nkilam kalantu pecupavan mutta:l ‘One who mixes English in their Tamil speech is fool.’

A:nkilam kalantu elutupavan ayo:kkiyan ‘One who mixes English in their Tamil writing is characterless scoundrel.’

A:nkila mo:kam pitittavan ka:ttumira:nti ‘One who is infatuated with English is barbarous, uncivilized.’

Academic Seminars and Literature in Support of Pure Tamil Movement

Some organisations like *tanitamil iyakkam* and *tamil valarcci natavaikkai Kuzhu* conduct academic-oriented activities like seminars and propagate pure Tamil words through their journals '*vellum tu:ya tamil*' and '*teLLu tamil*'.

The organisations advise people to use Tamil names for their children. To facilitate the use of Tamil proper names, boards containing, Tamil names are displayed in important spots in the city. Pure Tamil words are created for common dishes like '*panniya*' for bun, '*kulambi*' for coffee, etc.

The Tamil valarcci natavatikkaikuzhu comprises of literary scholars whose aim is to make known and propagate the richness of Tamil and to persuade the government to use Tamil in the domains of administration, education, etc. The persistent activities of this group are the main force behind the establishment of a Tamil development wing in Pondicherry administration. To inculcate a sense of pride in using Tamil, these scholars encourage and make demands on the officials to write their signature in Tamil only. The government also issued orders advising the officials and staff to write their signature in Tamil. The scholars also made demands on mass media for the correct use of place names and for avoiding unnecessary loan words.

The journal *tu:ya tamil* grades the officials in this manner:

‘Those who write their signature voluntarily in Tamil are very good Tamils.’

‘Those who write their signature following the advice of others are also good Tamils.’

‘But, is a person who writes their signature at the instance of government, a Tamil?’

In the same issue, the members of this association are advised to change their names into pure Tamil names. This is the first qualification to be a primary member of that association.

Attitudes of Pure Tamil Supporters

The study of attitudes of various associations is important to understand the extra-linguistic goals of the Pure Tamil Movement. The discourse of the Revolutionary Movement for Tamil Culture indicates that this organization considers pure Tamil as a unifying force for Tamils all over the world. In most cases, retention of Tamil identity through the unity of Tamils seems to be the major goal.

Some Linguistic Processes of Purism, as It Relates to Tamil

In the purification process, neologism and dialects become the major source for the supply of lexical items.

We can identify at least two groups among the Purists when it comes to coinage of terms.

Purism may operate on all linguistic levels. But more emphasis is given to the vocabulary than the other levels of language. In certain cases, purists consider script as a sacred matter and they do not attempt to modify it.

But those purists who consider language as an instrument try to modify script on the basis of efficiency and simplicity. The activities of purists who belong to 'Transworld Pure Tamil Promotion Party' clearly indicate that they consider language as an instrument by modifying the script system completely. The revised script system is followed in their booklets, notices, etc.

The reformation of the script system suggested by this group is completely different and deviant from the suggestions of others.

At the level of vocabulary as many as 3000 science and technology Tamil expressions for various terms by them (Arima makilko, 1988)

Palinikam – Mica
Tulluntu – Scooter

As for the attitude of the second group, it they retain the language in an unchanged traditional form. They always replace the loan words by selecting words from literary sources. Even well assimilated loan words are replaced by archaic words as follows.

The efficiency of the newly created words are also evaluated by taking literature as source.

Copy – *pati, nakal* New word (*pakarppu*)

Plastic – *Kulaimam, Nekil, Nekile* (*Va:rppan*)

Enrichment Models: Loan Translations

Regarding the enrichment of the language, the purists always depend on models of non-native origin but use materials from Tamil. Purists translate or replace all the loan materials into Tamil by taking Sanskrit or English models as the basis. Even for the translation of proper names, Sanskrit models were taken as the basis. The calque or loan translation serves as a healthy compromise between linguistic chauvinism on the one hand and the unnecessary use of foreign words, on the other.

Thomas (1975:23) pointed out that the calques (loan translation) satisfy aesthetically and

functionally, being national in its outer form yet supranational in semantic content.

Where is the Purist Tamil Movement Heading Toward?

The passion for the mother tongue and a determined quest for its retention in all the domains of language use including its total use in government administration, education and media have led to the emergence of Purist Tamil Movements and their dynamic activities in Pondicherry.

The followers of these associations are not adequately trained in modern theories of language and linguistic analysis. They base their activities on the ideas of Maraimalai Adigal and Pava:nar.

The contribution of the Purist Tamil Movement to the enrichment of modern technical and ordinary language vocabulary is very commendable, indeed. If they could also embrace the suggestions available through linguistic investigations, then their future contributions to Tamil will become very relevant.

However, one should also note that the prevailing apathy for such efforts among the Tamils, because of the ever growing immense code switching and code mixing, will make their effort more difficult and less fruitful in the years ahead.

In addition, there is great change in the socio-economic status of leading and majority non-Brahmin castes. The modern generation of these castes has become prosperous and more modernized, imbibing modern education and technology. This change in socio-economic status has led to the apathy mentioned above. These castes became the bedrock of the Pure Tamil Movement when it started, as there was close affinity between the political and socio-economic goals and the Pure Tamil Movement. This link is more or less broken. This makes the close identification of the Pure Tamil Movement and the development of Tamil as the sole and primary medium of communication more difficult to foresee and a less passionate theme for most people, both in Tamilnadu and Pondicherry.

Chapter 6

The Ideology Behind Tamil Purism

Linguistic Purism

Purism as a phenomenon is not only restricted to language but also is closely connected with the attitudes and the cultural aspects of a speech community. Purism is primarily viewed as a response to societal problems. Purists consider the presence of undesirable elements in their language as a problem to be solved in order to achieve and maintain distinct identity and proper status for their language.

Hence, purification can be categorized as one of the aspects of language planning; the others being revival, reform, standardization and modernization.

Dimensions of *Purism*

The term *purism* is used for various types of linguistic activities (Thomas 1991; 10-12). The absence of words of non-native origin may be the criterion of purification in some languages, while removal of the elements that are deemed to be foreign and replacing them by elements of national characters is considered as purism in some other languages. Efforts of classicalization, removal of colloquialism and removal of dialectal forms are also termed as purism for some speech communities.

Thomas (1991:12) proposes the following definition by combining the best features of the other definitions:

Purism is the manifestation of desire on the part of speech community (or some section of it) to preserve a language from or rid it of, portative foreign elements or other elements held to be undesirable (including those originating in dialects, sociolects, and styles of the same languages). It may be directed at all linguistic levels but primarily the lexicon. Above all purism is an aspect of the codification, cultivation and planning of standard languages.

Apart from this, scholars like Annamalai (1989) and Neustupny (1989) define purism in terms of sociopolitical dimensions.

Annamalai (1989: 230) observes purism as a linguistic manifestation of a social act to reject dominance and assert self-identity.

A Type of Language Correction

As already reorted, Neustupny (1989) considers purism as a type of language correction act. He

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classifies purism into three types by including all linguistic and socio-political aspect. They are

1. Discourse purism
2. Puristic idiom and
3. Ideologies of purism.

Discourse purism can be used with regard to the set of language correction acts which are employed to remove certain undesirable segments of speech act.

Puristic idiom is defined as a way of communicating this type of language correction. The language correction processes vary depending on the attitudes of the people towards language segments. The language segments that are considered as undesirable include dialect materials, foreign language materials from related/ unrelated languages, etc. the reasons for considering those segments as undesirable and ways of communicating about the correction process by the speech communities are defined as puristic idiom.

The ideologies of purism are normally expressed in the puristic idiom (Neustupny 1989: 212).

Ideologies and Puristic Idiom

The puristic idiom need not necessarily reflect the ideologies always. Some speech communities address the issue in one way, but act in different ways regarding purification process.

An attempt is made in this chapter to study the purification process in Tamil at two different periods, that is, before and after the movement of purism in Tamil.

Purism in Tamil

Tamil had been in contact with Sanskrit from time immemorial. Various religions and religious sects in India – Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, etc., have developed their discourses, theology, and rituals, etc. using the medium of Sanskrit. Traditional Indian philosophy and education employed Sanskrit for their expression and development. Literary forms from Sanskrit are varied and have impacted all the major Indian languages. Sanskrit has remained the bedrock of most Indian languages for lexicon, syntax, semantics, phonology, etc. Sanskrit has impacted ordinary people as well through mythologies, lexicon and other expressions throughout India. Thus, over the vast historical period, Sanskrit contributed a lot to the development of Indian languages and Indian. In modern times, Sanskrit continues to be perennial source for lexical coinage and use.

While Tamil is no exception to the influence of Sanskrit in lexicon and semantic nuances and literary forms, the persistent and enduring awareness of Tamil scholars of the past and the present to preserve the purity of Tamil is amazing, indeed. This resistance to Sanskrit influence and the zeal for retaining distinct identity has always been there in the Tamil society.

Grammar Sanctions against Code Mixing

This is very much evident even from the earliest grammatical work in Tamil now available, namely, *Tolkappiyam*. *Tolkappiyam* speaks of Sanskrit words and their use and regulates the ways by which such words and expressions may be imported. In particular, *Tolkappiyam* set up rules on how to write Sanskrit words using letters of the Tamil script. There is no special provision provided then in the Tamil script to write words of Sanskrit origin, as done these days. This actually helped Tamilize the pronunciation, spelling and loan translation of Sanskrit words in Tamil. Throughout the major part of the Tamil history, except for the last three centuries, these rules were strictly followed in Tamil literature, thus maintaining some puristic trend in Tamil.

Thus, during the earlier period one could observe the closure of Sanskrit materials to some extent in Tamil but models were not closed (Wexler 1974; Annamalai 1979). Indeed, Sanskrit words were translated into Tamil, Further, the Sanskrit words were transliterated in such a way to suit the phonological system obtained in Tamil.

It is important to note the significant part played by loan translation in maintaining purism in Tamil. Loan translation has been a major means for this purpose.

Elements for the Growth of Code Mixing

The impact of Sanskrit over Tamil language and literature from the 12th century onwards was with such force that it affected the identity and independence of Tamil. With greater emphasis on religious institutions and construction of temples where worship followed Sanskrit rituals probably replacing the earlier models of worship through Tamil, with the emergence of elitist Temples with large landholdings, with the widespread use of inscriptions as a major source of dissemination of information relating to social works, and with the rise in feudalism and the rise of various dynasties with great inclination to regard Sanskrit as superior, Tamil began to receive large numbers of words. However, such receipts still could not be fully accommodated because of the barriers set in the Tamil script as per the grammatical traditions.

When *manipravaala* style of mixing Tamil and Sanskrit became fashionable along with the ever-growing caste divisions with sharply marked hierarchy, literacy and mastery of *manipravaala* appeared to be identical. Code-mixing at the lexical level became very prestigious. And this added to the erosion of the distinctive characteristics of Tamil.

Genesis of Modern Purist Movement in Tamil

The socio-cultural and political conditions of the Tamil society during latter half of the 19th

century were also very conducive for the genesis of pure Tamil movement. The genesis of pure Tamil movement, the social situation during that period and its implications, etc. were studied by many scholars (for details see: Annamalai (1979); Kailasapathi (1978); Saratha Nambi Arooran (1994); Ilankumaran (1991)).

Not a Negative Movement?

From these studies it is observed that the implication of pure Tamil movement could be inferred both at the linguistic and societal levels. Scholars, who stepped up the movement in favor of purism argued that the movement was aimed to reform Tamil language and it was not a negative movement against Sanskrit.

At the linguistic level, the arguments put forward by the purists were that the indiscriminate use of loan words would destroy the sweetness, generative capacity and the beauty of Tamil. In addition they argued that the loan words would create an impression that Tamil could not function independently (Adigal 1919: 18,19).

Selected Items for Rejection

Hence purists not only rejected the loan words but also the dialectal and other words which, in their view, affected the intelligibility and purity of Tamil. (However, soon in the second half of the 20th century, dialects would find a favorable treatment as it is in the dialects that the leaders and scholars of the Purist Movement would find pure Tamil words. Moreover they would find real Tamil words for science, technical objects and administration in the dialects.) While removing the loan words the purists selected old literature as a major source for the creation of new words.

The Purists not only opposed the use of Sanskrit words but also replaced many Sanskrit words with classical Tamil words. The revival of Tamil from the “clutches” of Sanskrit was made possible only because of the rich content of Tamil literature which has 2000 years of continuous literary tradition.

Justification for Purging

At that time, Tamil purification process was justified for the following reasons.

1. To uphold the tradition of Tamil
2. To maintain a distinct identity
3. To oppose imposition and foreign dependency
4. Aesthetic criteria
5. Intelligibility criteria.

Covert, or Not So Covert, Ideology behind Pure Tamil Movement

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A close observation of the Tamil society reveals a covert ideology behind Tamil purism. The covert ideology is to restructure the power pattern of the society.

In the name of traditional caste hierarchy, Tamil Brahmins, even though small in number, gained an upper hand in the Tamil society and occupied power domains like religion, administration, education, technology, corporations, etc. However, this domination was not a recent creation or imposition. It is easily recognized from the days of Pallava dynasty and throughout the recorded history of Tamilnadu.

But with the East India Company and British rule, with the emergence of modern ideas of equality and job opportunities for all, etc., with the abolition of zamindari system, and such other progressive measures adopted from the British system and with the impact of Christian missionaries, other castes also wanted a share in the economic and social superiority of Tamil Brahmins. Brahmin families along with a few vegetarian castes among the Tamils had a long history of formal education and thus were able to take advantage of the opportunities under the East India and British rule. They kept this lead to the exclusion of other sections of the society. In addition, the Tamil Brahmins kept their dialect unattainable by others by mixing a lot of Sanskrit words and made their dialect as a distinct social marker. While one may be able to find quite a bit of similarity between the caste dialects of non-Brahmins, there is a wide gulf between these dialects as a group and the dialect of the Brahmins. To assert their distinctiveness the non-Brahmins rejected Sanskrit words. The emergence of the Dravidian movement is an elegant testimony to the social struggle during that period.

We must also admit that no single description of the processes involved in the emergence of the Purist Movement would be a satisfactory explanation. Historical, economic, social, political, linguistic and psychological factors are involved in this process. These factors found/find their way into the definition and operation of the Purist Movement.

Achievements of Tamil Purism

The achievements of Tamil purism could not be underestimated by designating it as an elitist movement. The major achievement of the Pure Tamil movement was rejuvenating and reviving the pride of Tamil language. Ample evidences were put forward to assert the distinctiveness and independence of Tamil language and literature (Ibid: 43). Vitality and independence of Tamil were also established by replacing all Sanskrit loan words.

But the main drawback of the movement was that the purists fully depended on the literary sources for the development, until recently. Even the well established loan words were also replaced by the literary words which created problem in communication as well as in standardization. The purists had taken an extreme stand by insisting on the common people to speak in standard dialect in the place of spoken dialect (Kothandaraman 1996: 153).

Significant Success

As already reported, the impact and influence of Sanskrit was not only on Tamil but also on other Indian Languages. There were similar movements in the history of other languages like Malayalam, Telugu and Kannada. But the impact of those movements was not as effective as in the case of Tamil.

The main reason for the success of the movement in Tamil may be attributed two two reasons, namely, (1) the emotional attachment of the people towards Tamil and (2) the rich literary tradition of Tamil.

The attitude of Tamils towards their language was a major factor in this regard. Blunted by the lack of early resistance to Sanskrit words, by the lack of grammatical traditions that encouraged elimination and/or drastic modification of borrowed Sanskrit words, and by the early introduction and adoption of script accommodation, the people of other tongues did not/do not consider Sanskrit is a threat to their distinct identity. It is also possible that the continuity of their distinct identity, despite massive borrowing from Sanskrit, enabled them not to react or overreact to incursions of Sanskrit lexicon, script and letter arrangements, and even grammatical categories. They began to look at social issues such as the domination of Brahmins and other upper castes in non-linguistic terms. For the Tamils, language plays the most crucial window to almost any and every social and political issue. In addition, language has become a very emotional and psychological issue. This was an important factor which protected the language whenever there were threats to the independence and distinct identity of Tamil.

However, linking politics, identity and emotions to language is getting to be more evident in the sister languages of Tamil in South India. The relation between the language and the speaker was an emotional one.

Present State of Purism

The present trend of Tamil purism can be addressed by taking a dictionary titled *The Dictionary of English Loan Words in Modern Tamil*, compiled by Chandran Tucker (1986) as evidence.

This dictionary contains an alphabetical collection of about 4000 English loan words used in modern Tamil. This dictionary offers an interesting sociological study.

Language is a social phenomenon. The study of language change reveals the changes in the social system and consequent developments in the society. The developments and the attitudes of the speakers are manifested through the kind of vocabulary they use in their discourse. Hence, the materials included in a scientifically prepared lexicon prove to be of an immense use for understanding the social history of the language.

Sources from which Loan Words were Collected

The loan words entered in this special dictionary have been collected from wide sources such as:

1. Popular periodicals (A:nanta Vikatan, Kalki, Kalaimakal, Kumutam, Rani, Tinamani Katir), covering over a period of six months.
2. Daily newspapers (ma:lai Muracu, Tinamani, Tinatanti) covering a period of one month:, and
3. Two thousand pages of modern novels and short stories.

The loan words are given as they were found written in the above mentioned sources and arranged in the Tamil alphabetical order. It is stated in the foreword that this is prepared with the intention to help practically the foreign students in such a way that they themselves can take reading exercises and identify English loan words in modern writing such as in newspapers and magazines. However, it is a good source book for the study of linguistic and social aspects of loan words in modern Tamil.

Revealing the Impact of English over Modern Tamil

This dictionary is an eloquent testimony to prove the impact of English over modern Tamil.

This dictionary reflects the trends of later part of the 20th century journals, novels and newspapers. This period is very important since it is a period of rapid modernization both in Tamil society and language.

At the level of language, national languages are introduced in new domains replacing the colonial English language. Those languages have to be developed in such a way to function effectively in their respective domains. To cope up with the modernity, every Indian language

has to create new vocabulary and new styles. One of the important sources of vocabulary development proved to be borrowing.

The Tragedy and Irony of Borrowing

Unfortunately, the study of the English loan words in the present dictionary shows that the words are not borrowed to express modern concepts. The terms listed in the dictionary are common words used by the literates in their day-to-day conversation. Hence, it is very clear that the words are borrowed for prestige sake. The new clusters and transliteration of English words entered in this dictionary remind us of the same or similar strategy adopted for the use of Sanskrit words in the early period.

As the Ecclesiast declares, there is nothing new under the sun! (Ecclesiastes 1 : 9).

Comparative Study of Tamil Purism

During the pre-era of purification, before the start of the modern day Pure Tamil Movement, linguistically Sanskrit and sociologically the Brahmins dominated the scene. During Vedic and post-Vedic periods Sanskrit was the language of the learned and this learned community was by and large represented by the Brahmins. Sanskrit was considered as a source for language development. But during the post-era of purification, it was English that dominates the scene.

Annamalai (1979) states that even after the struggle made by purists to eliminate all foreign words from Tamil, the existence of a lot of loan words proved purism is an elite conflict for achieving higher power and social control in the case of Tamil, the use of Tamil words in place of foreign words was advocated and propagated by upper caste non-Brahmins raising against the domination of Brahmins. But this is only partially true.

The conclusion suggested in the above cited reference may be true to some extent for the vegetarian non-Brahmin caste scholars who spearheaded the movement. But they were always in the forefront for several centuries to maintain the distinct identity of Tamil through their own religious and sectarian identities. The Tamil priesthood elitist and vegetarian temples with large landholdings were their privileged provenance and they needed to protect their territory.

However, members of many communities that did not have even an iota of share in the social and economic privileges of upper castes joined in the movement to purge Tamil of Sanskrit words. Communities such as Adi Dravidar, Nadar, Vanniyar and Mukkulathor were part of the bandwagon mainly because of their traditional belief that they were/are the protectors of Tamil. And the rising younger generation felt very emotional about the identity issues.

Interesting Statistics

A statistical study made by the author, taking sample texts belonging to two different periods

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with a gap of 60 years, shows very interesting results regarding loan words. The data were collected from a weekly, namely, A:nanta Vikatan.

Period	Sanskrit words	English words
1936	25%	10%
1996	10%	8%

An estimate of the use of Sanskrit words in Tamil during 1900-1950 given by A. Chidambaranathan [as given in Hardgrave (1965: 30)] is that the Sanskrit words used in Tamil have come down to 50% to 20% in fifty years.

But the present state of language purism shows a different trend.

It is observed (from the table) that the usage of Sanskrit and English loan words decreased to some extent in the contemporary Tamil. But new coinages are made by taking English as models. The models used for coining terms are basically either Sanskrit or English.

Modernization of Tamil – Paradigm Change

Modernization of Tamil is characterized by two different processes, namely, Sanskritization and Westernization at two different periods.

In the post-era of purification, we can note, and the present dictionary also proves this, a paradigm change in the Tamil society. Kuhn [1970: 175 (quoted in Thomas 1991:147)] defines a paradigm as “as entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques and so on shared by the members of a given community”. The two paradigms of Sanskritization and Westernization share common features such as elite domination and giving models for coinage in the language.

The replacement of the Sanskrit paradigm by the English paradigm is prompted by many factors as follows

Westernization tries to create a class based society where economic status plays a crucial role. English language is considered as an instrument for achieving economic status and western way of life. But, in the case of Sanskritization, everything revolves around traditional caste based hierarchy. Emergence of new elite class in the caste based society is a post-colonial process in India. This is also very much evident in the use of language where the traditional caste names are replaced by professional terms. Using English terms with professional flavor seems to be more respectable rather than using caste names.

vanna:n - Doby

ampattan - Barber
a:ca:ri - Carpenter

Exclusive exploitation of social resources by a particular privileged community and suppression of other communities in the name of traditional caste hierarchy are under attack by westernization. The later-half of the 20th century being the period of science technology in India, westernization is adopted by Tamils for their advancement.

A Favorable Trend for the Development of Tamil

At present the socio-political situation in Tamilnadu is in favor of Tamil development. Tamil language borrows a lot of models from English for its modernization. There is no such movement to oppose English loan words now. The intensity of puristic tendency is less in the modern Tamil because the intensity of the struggle against social domination is less. It also shows that most of the people favor English for modernization.

The twenty-first century will be an era of globalised free market and competition in trade. Owing to the highly competitive market the multinational companies use the language of the people in order to advertise and sell their product. Hence, these companies inform the consumers about their products using day-to-day Tamil. Thus Tamil is enriched by new words and new forms of discourses which could be easily adapted by a common man. Hence, the ideology of Tamil Purism during the 21st century will be in support of colloquialism and simplification rather than traditionalism. The elites of this century will be the ones who would control mass media and business.

The Political climate is also in favor of the Tamil development.

The DMK party, one of the two main political parties in Tamilnadu, always proclaims Tamil as a symbol of identity in its political agenda. After returning to power in 1996, the DMK Government created a separate ministry for Tamil Development and Culture, to promote the use of Tamil language at all the levels of administration.

The present Government in Tamilnadu, which is also run by the DMK, gives priority to Tamil in certain aspects. It insists on the use Tamil in business sign boards and communication. The government also changed the name of Madras to “Chennai” as part of its efforts to develop and consolidate Tamil identity. The language ideology of the ruling DMK party is “two-language” formula, which favors both English and Tamil. At this stage the role of the Government is to widen the domains of use of Tamil such as administration, education, law, etc., instead of changing the names alone into Tamil. Further extension of domains for the use of Tamil is entirely a policy matter of the present ruling party.

If the power domains such as education, administration, law are easily accessible to a common man, then the development of Tamil society with Tamil language as its main and distinguishing

identity is assured. But, how the new generation of the educated and urban classes will embrace these directions will decide the future.

Chapter 7

Attitudes towards Tamil Purism: An Evaluation

EngaL vaazhvum engaL vaLamum mangada

TamizhenRu Cange muzhangu

Our body, wealth our sweet Tamil
We will surrender to our sweet Tamil

Udal maNNukku uyir Tamizhukku
'Life to Tamil and body to earth'

Language Attitudes

The above rhetoric of mid-twentieth century is an eloquent testimony for the attitudes of the Tamils towards their mother tongue.

Every speech community has certain attitudes towards their language which need not be similar. There are also some revealing folk attitudes as to “What people think about their own language and the languages of others? Where does our language come from? Where do the names come from and what power is derived from naming people or things? What do we think about speech variation?” etc.

The Deification and the Attitude of Sacrificing Everything for the Glory of Language

But the attitude of ‘sacrificing all’, for the sake of Tamil is peculiar and unique. Furthermore, the attitudes of the Tamils towards their mother tongue differ from the attitudes of the other language speakers like Malayalam and Telugu towards their mother tongues from the point of view of what constitutes language development, growth, identity maintenance, etc.

Rhetoric as Opposed to Actual Practice

The attitudes of people may be traced not only from their rhetoric about their language but also

from the actual acts they perform for the development and identify of their language.

For example, the great challenge faced by the Indian languages in the context of modernization in this age of information technology is the coinage of technical terms and appropriate registers. The major sources for the development of technical terms are either through borrowing from the dominant language or building terms from out of native resources.

Dependence on Other Languages

Even though every language has the potential to build up technical terms from its own resources, suitable to any age, the dependence of the speech community on other languages reveals the attitude of that speech community.

The processes of the coinage of technical terms in Malayalam, Telugu and Tamil, even though they belong to the same language family, show vast difference. Malayalam and Telugu languages depend more on Sanskrit and English borrowings for language development whereas for Tamil it is through native resources, either classical or modern Tamil, with little borrowing. This clearly shows the differences in emphasis.

Malayalam and Telugu speakers seek their identity even with large scale of borrowing from Sanskrit. They find value in Sanskrit borrowings, which can be retained with the help of their writing system. In fact their writing system was designed with the idea of incorporating Sanskrit words both already in practice and yet to be borrowed. Borrowing was highly valued in these languages. As for the Tamils, language is their life as evidenced from their rhetoric for many centuries. There were many instances where the rhetoric manifested into reality because of their devotions to Tamil, as Sumathi Ramasamy (1998) stated.

The devotional attitude of Tamils towards their mother tongue is not a sudden phenomenon. It has its deep roots at the social, political, historical and cultural levels. It is a type of 'linguistic culture' as Schiffman (1996) states, which contains the existence of earliest records about language, myths, attitudes and elaborate cultural **heritage** about language.

Nurture of Tamil

The linguistic culture of Tamils had been nurtured on the following lines:

1. The major starting point is the propagation of the discovery of the uniqueness of Tamil by European missionaries. There was a belief among a minor but powerful section of the people that Tamil was derived from Sanskrit which was convincingly disproved by Robert Caldwell. Taking cues from his writings, the Tamil pride was built up in modern times that in terms of origin and divinity Tamil is equal to and no less important than Sanskrit.

2. The knowledge of the existence of a unique literary tradition such as Sangam Literature dating from the Ancient Period and an ancient independent grammar Tolkappiyam, which approached Tamil in truly indigenous ways, inculcated a sense of pride and self consciousness among the Tamils.
3. The printing and publication of ancient Tamil literary works and writings of the scholars helped a large section of the people to know about their literary tradition.
4. The establishment of pure Tamil movement by Marimalai Adigal and the political support it gained, created an awareness about the social inequalities and the growing influence of Sanskrit on Tamil.

Thus, Tamil has been transferred into an object of devotion in the course of social mobilization and political empowerment of its people.

Purism is also a Response to Existing Societal Problems

The act of purism, whether it is consciously or unconsciously performed, can be considered as a response to a particular societal problem. To keep one's language pure is a type of attitude towards language. It needs to be examined from the social and psychological points of view. Although Purism in Tamil had an overt agenda of cleansing language, there was also a hidden agenda of restricting the power pattern of the society.

During the era of purification movement there were many activities undertaken by scholars to purify or revive Tamil language. Those activities had different means and goals.

A Typology of Tamil Development Projects

Sumathi Ramasamy (1998) categorizes these revival projects on the basis of the actor and goals as follows.

1. Religious idiom
2. Counter-Orientalist classicism (a) Compensatory classicism, (b) Contestary classicism
3. Nationalist idiom
4. Ethnic idiom.

The revival projects differed from each other on the following aspects:

- a. Whether Tamil be revived religiously or by insisting classicality or by establishing Dravida Nadu.

- b. Against whom their efforts be directed or who were the dominating force; whether Brahmins or British.
- c. Against which language the struggle has to be directed: Hindi or Sanskrit or English.
- d. What kind of Tamil be insisted:- Whether pure Tamil or simple, pragmatic Tamil or People's Tamil.

The above projects clearly show the enormity of the problems encountered by Tamil from many fronts during the Era of Pure Tamil Movement. The identity Tamils and Tamil language were in question.

Hence, scholars report that these types of movements were rarely concerned with language alone. Instead, they are crucially intertwined with the question of identity, of identification of self and other issues (Annamalai, 1989).

Effective Results in the Earlier Period

The struggle against those dominating forces by various revival projects yielded good results in the post-purification movement era. After independence, Tamil language assumes new functions. Tamil was introduced in the domain of administration, mass media and judiciary, where English was previously used. For effective functioning of Tamil in these domains directorates were established and the functions were monitored.

Continuing Confrontation

Large number of technical terms is created in the new domains by taking models from Sanskrit or English and materials from Tamil. There is still a type of confrontation between purists on this aspect, namely, whether to take classical/ancient materials or day-to-day language for coining technical terms. Hundreds and thousands of lexical items from native sources replacing Sanskrit were created.

The impact of these projects looks very significant when we compare the situation obtaining in Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam, where Sanskrit and English dominate the scene till date.

Attack on English

Now, this is an era of globalization and open market economy. The multinational companies strive to capture the Indian market through all means. The domination of English as an international language continues to hold an upper hand in the society. The higher education in all fields including science and technology is still though the English medium. So, now it is English that is perceived to be reducing the importance, status and power of Tamil. So, the target of

attack and replacement is now English.

This is very much evident from the activities of several Tamil Associations now in Pondicherry. The purists of the present day orient their activities focusing English as their target. The idiom of these organizations is to promote co-ordination and unification of the Tamils through language identity. The organizations advise people to use Tamil names for their children.

Despite their continued efforts, the domination of English is felt high in all the fields of activity. Unlike the earlier period, there is an awakening among the scholars and writers to accept and adopt ordinary common Tamil in their writing. The use of dialects in novels and mass media like cinema demonstrate and recognize the varieties of Tamil and these varieties have come to be used for limited purposes of entertainment and political wrangling.

A Study of Language Attitudes

In this type of situation, a study of attitudes towards purism is essential to know the status of Tamil. The questions on attitudes are divided into two sections:

- i. Preferential attitude question and
- ii. Manifest attitude questions.

1. Questions on preferential Attitude.

- i. Do you want the purity of Tamil be preserved?
- ii. Do you want to speak in pure Tamil with your friends?
- iii. Do you consider pure Tamil as a means of language development and identity?
- iv. Do you want the loan words which became part and parcel of Tamil be removed?

2. Questions on manifest attitudes:

- i. Do you use pure Tamil for naming your children?
- ii. What is the medium of instruction for your children?
- iii. Do you mix loan words while speaking or writing?

The questionnaires were administered to 220 informants (160 males and 60 females) with different age groups and educational background.

In order to study the attitudes towards purism, it is important to know the perception of the informants about purism. The informants were asked to state their view on purism.

Four parameters of purism at the written level were employed:

- i. Avoidance of loan words
- ii. Avoidance of grammatical elements which are not native to the structure of Tamil
- iii. Strict adherence to the ancient Tamil structure without modification
- iv. Use of simple modern Tamil without loan words.

It is pertinent to point out that 80.4 percent of the informants preferred the last parameter to achieve purism. There are a few pundits who still hold the view of using the ancient Tamil structure without modification to achieve purism.

As far as purism at the spoken level is concerned, more than 90% of the informants preferred the natural speech without any code-mixing. They were given the following options:

- a) Speak as we write
- b) Natural speech without any mixing
- c) Speak in your dialect

It should be noted that the other two extremes, namely, avoidance of dialectal speech and formal written speech, were not preferred by many.

Responses for the Preferential Attitude Questions

The preferential attitude question, namely, “Do you want the purity of Tamil to be preserved?” elicited interesting results. None of the informants answered negatively. All the informants are of the opinion that the purity of Tamil should be maintained.

This type of attitudes (which may be difficult to put in practice) may be the result of the underlying concern of the Tamils relating to the future of their language in relation to Hindi and Sanskrit. There is a clear perception that Hindi and Sanskrit at the all India level have an edge over other languages, and that these languages may be imposed on Tamil if protective measures are not put in place. The impact of the struggle against Hindi and Sanskrit during the Pure Tamil Movement period continues to be strong and active in the Tamil psyche. A strong measure of support for this attitude is derived from a spectrum of political organizations within Tamilnadu and Pondicherry. This also impacts the continuance and expansion of this attitude.

The responses to the second preferential question, namely, “Do you want to speak in pure Tamil with your friends?”, and the responses to the manifest attitude question, namely, “Do you mix loan words when you speak?” reveal the actual linguistic behavior of the informants.

The preferential question elicited favorable answers from only 7.8% of the informants whereas

the remaining informants expressed that it would be difficult for them to use pure Tamil. But, for the manifest question, more than 85% of the people admitted that they mix loan words in their utterances while speaking. The reasons they attributed for this behavior are making their communication intelligible and the existence of the practice of the use of loan words for a long period. They expressed difficulty for them to change all of a sudden.

The attitude towards language and identity can also be studied by the third preferential question, namely, Pure Tamil as a means of language development and identity. The attitude of the informants is that they want to have Tamil as an identity symbol for the Tamils and for this to happen they want to preserve Tamil language, and use of Pure Tamil should be emphasized for development.

There are ways open to the people to maintain their identity through using Tamil for practical purposes in their day-to-day life. They can help retain their Tamil identity and further develop their affinity to their mother tongue by giving Tamil names to their children, or change their names to pure Tamil and by opting for the Tamil medium of instruction for their children. The responses to the manifest questions, “Do you use pure Tamil for naming your children?” and “What is the medium of instruction do you prefer for your children?” show vast difference between preference and practice.

Among the responses to the first question, it is noticed that 8% of the informants have changed their names adopting pure Tamil names to show their devotion to Tamil. It is a common practice among teachers and writers in Pondicherry to have nicknames. There are such names as

Subramaniam > Thirumurugan
Kandasamy > Tamilselvan
Santhosh raja > Makizhko

But, as for giving Tamil names to their children, only 24.6% of the informants responded positively. The informants who have not given Tamil names to their children stated many reasons for their act. Mostly they attribute the practice to their family elders and their devotion to their religion as reasons for the existence of non-pure Tamil names. Note that in the past under the heavy influence of the Dravidian and Pure Tamil Movements, such reasons took a backseat. Moreover, these reasons were always the stock-in-trade reasons offered by those, especially from the Brahmin and other upper caste communities to justify all sorts of conservative acts. That such reasoning is now widespread only reveals the weakening of the hold of the Dravidian and Pure Tamil Movements among the Tamils.

The most important question about the medium of instruction to their wards elicited very insightful responses. As for the medium of instruction is concerned, 68% of the informants said that their children are studying in English medium schools. Employment opportunities and social status are the two main reasons they attributed for sending their children to English medium schools. However, a few informants pointed out the lack of standard Tamil schools in

Pondicherry.

At the same time, 32% of informants who opted for the Tamil medium schools attributed their Tamil affinity and mother tongue education as reasons for sending their children to Tamil medium schools. Some other reasons like proximity of schools, low economic status etc., also influenced the choice in favor of the Tamil medium schools.

The preferential attitude and the actual act of the informants may be analyzed by the correlation of the questions, do they want to replace the loan words which became the part and parcel of Tamil, and their actual ability to identify/replace loan words in a given text.

As for the replacement of loan words is concerned, 72% of the informants wanted to replace even the well assimilated loan words with pure Tamil words. The informants have not noted that the intelligibility problem may intervene if the well established loans are replaced by pure Tamil words. It is worth mentioning here that the informants had mentioned that they mix loan words for making their communication clear. However, what they have expressed is only a preferential attitude.

Identification and Replacement of Loan Words

The ability of the all the informants who responded favorably to the process of identification and the replacement of the loan words in a given text relates cannot be ascertained or assured. Even if one is able to identify the loan words, replacing them by pure Tamil words is not possible for all, since creation of terms or knowledge of such specialized items requires special skills. Hence in this study the informants were asked to identify the loan words alone.

The selected text from *India Today* (Tamil) magazine contains thirty-two loan words which include 10 English words, 6 Perso- Arabic and 16 Sanskrit words. The Sanskrit and Perso-Arabic words are well assimilated ones, in the sense of frequency of occurrence and their meanings.

As for the identification of loan words, the informants were able to identify English words mostly and a few Sanskrit words which contain *grandha* letters. Tamil language teachers and scholars involved in puristic activities were able to identify all the Sanskrit and Perso-Arabic words. Though they expressed their desire to replace the well assimilated loan words, the other informants could not even identify them.

Some Possible Generalizations

From the foregoing analysis of the preferential and manifest attitudes, we can conclude as follows.

1. Activities related to the purification of language seem to be an endeavor of those who are interested and involved in it.

2. Age and educational levels of the informants have no significant variation as regards the concerns of language.
3. Males are involved more in these endeavors than females.
4. The attitude of females is more in favor of English words and English medium schools than males.
5. The preferential attitudes are in favor of Tamil language but, in the manifest attitudes, there may be some other social reasons, which hinder manifestation.
6. Preferential attitudes are well perceived and accepted by the informants rather than devotional attitudes.

To Conclude

As seen in the beginning of this chapter, the devotional attitudes took deep roots in the minds of the people during the era of purification. The social circumstances, such as the monopoly of Brahmins in Government jobs, their pro-Brahmin employment policies in the industries they developed, the domination of Sanskrit over Tamil, and the patriotic favor in favor of Tamil, etc., were conducive to sow the seeds of language devotion. The dominating forces then were well within the society and they could wage a battle against them using language issues. In the present day social situation also, the Tamil society encounters the dominating force in the form of another language, culture, economy, etc. But the dominating forces are of international character with global perspectives. As the current dominating force appears to offer better job opportunities to all who are qualified without giving much weight to caste and religious/sectarian considerations, the opposition to such adversity is blunted.

Where the culture and values of the whole society are dominated by economic concerns, it is natural that language as a part of culture also is seen more as an instrument for economic prosperity, rather than an object of devotion. Unless planned efforts and passionate and appealing rhetoric are directed towards making Tamil an effective tool for economic prosperity, the efforts of the Pure Tamil scholars and adherents will become in vain; perhaps a glorious chapter, a thing of the past. The reminiscence of earlier rhetoric still can play a positive role in developing a new venture, namely, economic prosperity through language.

Chapter 8

The Notion of Tamil Development in Pondicherry - Theory and Practice

A Spectacle in Favor of Tamil

In May 2001, the Government of Pondicherry witnessed a mild protest by a group of Tamil scholars agitating in favor of rapid and speedy programs for the development of Tamil. A group of Tamil scholars walked through the streets of Pondicherry to surrender to the government, the awards they received from the Government earlier. These awards include *Tamil Ma:maNi* and *Putuvaik kalai Ma:maNi*.

The awards were given to the Tamil scholars by the government in appreciation of their contribution to Tamil language and literature in early 2001 for the year 1999-2000. The same group of scholars had earlier pleaded with the government to institute such awards to be distributed to the scholars who excelled in the fields of literature, art, dance, etc.

Two scholars have surrendered the awards while the others kept them. The reason cited by them for returning the awards was that the employees of the government are not signing documents in Tamil.

The Government of Pondicherry had issued orders in this regard as early as 1997, advising all the employees of the government to sign the documents in Tamil in all official correspondences. The scholars blamed the government and the officials for not implementing the order sincerely. Even though the government had issued and circulated the order twice it could not ensure its implementation.

From the point of view of these scholars, this particular act made them to think that the government is considering Tamil as a worthless language even for merely signing the documents. The scholars were the active members of the Action committee for Tamil development (ACTD).

A Symbolic Act, with Hidden Implications

What is the role of signing in Tamil in government documents, relating to the development of Tamil? It is apparent that one could sign their names or initials in a language without knowing that language. If so, how could this simple and seemingly innocuous act is taken so seriously by the scholars as representing a step forward in the use of Tamil and how it could relate to

processes of the development of Tamil? A mere symbolic act that was expected to create a lot of satisfaction in the minds of Tamils!?

Notion of Tamil Development

The notion to Tamil development from the point of view of ACTD is to be analyzed since they are active members engaged in language development activities. The notion of Tamil development in Pondicherry can be traced from the activities of Tamil groups and journals, books, etc., these scholars publish.

There are two monthly magazines, namely, *teLi Tamil* and *Vellum tu:ya Tamil* which have been exclusively published for Tamil development in Pondicherry for the last ten years. The journals *teLi Tamil* reflects the attitudes of the ACTD scholars. A few lines of the poem of the great poet of Pondicherry, Bharathidasan's is taken as a motto of their journal. The lines go like this

*KeTal enke tamizhin nalam ankellam
talaiyiTTuk kiLarcci eeyka*

“Wherever the welfare of Tamil/Tamils is affected
Intervene and Protest against it”

Hence, they orient their activities towards conducting protest meetings for the development of Tamil, giving advice to the government in form of demands, conducting regular literary meetings, organizing rallies, both in urban and rural areas to create awareness about Tamil development, etc.

The contents of the journals also clearly indicate their notion and ideologies with respect to Tamil development. From the contents, it is inferred that *teLi Tamil* emphasizes the preservation of traditional grammar, music, etc., writing Tamil without spelling and sandi errors, avoidance of loan words, criticism/appreciation of the activities of the government, other institutions, and other activities related to Tamil, culture, etc. The articles in this journal are selected by giving preference to Tamil grammar, Tamil music, etc.

The contents of the journal *vellum tu:ya Tamil* is slightly different from *teLi Tamil*. It publishes creative writings, which are written in pure Tamil. It follows the tradition of *Pa:va:nar*, a great Tamil purist scholar, in the coinage of technical terms. It publishes pure Tamil equivalents for English and other loan words. Both the magazines emphasize purism in language and keeping Tamil tradition intact in grammar, music, spelling, etc. This is due to the devotional attitudes of the people towards Tamil.

Ideologies of the ACTD

Before analyzing the policies of ACTD, we may look at the types and models of language planning. There are two types of language planning, namely, status planning and corpus planning, based on the function and structure of the language.

Status planning or allocation of language use for specific functions is the first type of language planning carried out by the national policy making body of a country (Haugen 1983). This type of planning is always associated with language policies. Language planners refer to this type of planning as 'decision-making'. Language policies of a nation with reference to the question of official language, medium of instruction, language of mass media, language of judiciary, etc., come under this type.

The second type of planning, namely, corpus planning, is the one connected with language materials which have to be developed according to the language policies of the concerned nation. Corpus of a language (from sound to sentences) undergoes changes in order to make the language materials simple, effective, and efficient in communication.

As for the Pondicherry situation is concerned, the ACTD group suggests certain policies both at the status and corpus levels. These policies are given to the government in the form of demands to develop Tamil. Since it is not a government authorized body, the active members could only put forward their demands with regard to Tamil.

The consolidation of those demands given to the government since 1996 clearly portrays their policies with regard to status and corpus levels. Their notion of Tamil development is categorized under four areas of language use as follows.

Use of Tamil in Administration

1. Implementation of Official Language Act of 1965.
2. To activate the Tamil development wing or department of Tamil Development within the Government.
3. To make Tamil proficiency and Tamil typing a compulsory qualification for government jobs.
4. Publication of administrative/legal glossaries.
5. Teaching of Tamil to non-Tamil officials.
6. Giving training to government officials in Tamil administration.
7. Only those who know Tamil should be employed as IAS/IPS Officials in Pondicherry.

Use of Tamil in Education

1. Compulsory Tamil medium education up to V Standard. English be introduced from VI Standard onwards as second language.
2. All English medium Schools should be converted into Tamil School by an order of the government.
3. From Pre-KG to Post-Graduate level, Tamil should be used.
4. Even Higher education and professional courses be in Tamil.
5. To cancel the recognition of the schools which do not follow Tamil medium or Tamil teaching as a language.
6. Reservation of seats for Tamil medium students in professional courses and Bonus marks to the Tamil medium students in the entrance examination.
7. Joint entrance test for professional courses be in Tamil/Malayalam/Telugu.
8. The existing status that a child can complete its school education without studying Tamil should be changed.

Use of Tamil in Public domains

1. Name boards of all Government/Private establishments be in Tamil
2. The name Puducheri should be used instead of Pondicherry.
3. Personal names should be in Tamil.
4. Use of Tamil symbols for numerals and Tamil calendar.
5. Registration of all vehicles be in Tamil.
6. Tamil should be the language of temple, that is, in the religious domain for rituals in the temples.
7. Use of other languages like Sanskrit in the private marriage function should be banned
8. Sanskrit should not be taught in Government institutions.

Other Activities to Develop Tamil

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1. All Government Officials should sign documents in Tamil.
2. Preference should be given to Tamil medium candidates in Government jobs.
3. Books written in Tamil should be purchased by the Government deducting 15% discount from the cover price, instead of deducting 25%, and the number of copies purchased be enhanced.
4. One of the Tamil scholars be nominated to the Legislature Assembly.
5. Government should listen to the advice of Tamil scholars in solving language related problems.
6. Tamil teachers' names should be on top of the attendance register maintained in the schools.
7. Government should award titles like tamil ma:maNi and putuvaik kalaima:maNi to the reputed Tamil scholars.
8. Government should award prizes to best Tamil books.
9. Government should institute awards in the names of reputed Tamil scholars like *Thiruvalluvar*, *Pavendar*, etc.
10. Central Government should declare *Thirukkural* as the national book of India.
11. Government should release *Bharathidasan* Postal Stamp.
12. Government should award scholarship to Tamil Scholars.

One of the demands of the Tamil scholars was that the Government should listen to their advice in Tamil development matters. The Government, irrespective of the political party in power, implemented certain language related programmes in consultation with these scholars, from time to time.

Language Policy in Pondicherry

Generally speaking, the formulation of the official language policy in Pondicherry takes these factors into consideration. Three languages are used for official purposes unlike in other states, namely, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. However, English and French are also recognized for official purposes as per the official language policy.

Government Programmes with reference to Language Development

Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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Linguistic Purism and Language Planning in a Multilingual Context: Tamil in Pondicherry

The Pondicherry Government is implementing many programs for the development of Tamil and Tamil culture through various departments. The Government issued orders to keep the name boards in Tamil as early as 1977. It also established the Tamil development wing during 1990.

The following programs of the Government illustrate the status of Tamil development in Pondicherry.

1. Awarding grant-in-aids to publish creative literature and Research publications to the natives of Pondicherry.
2. Awarding grant-in-aids to tropes of drama, dance for enacting social reformation plays.
3. Awarding grant-in-aids to voluntary agencies for conducting literary events, conference, literary shows, etc.
4. Instituted research fellowship in the names of *Bharathiyar*, *Bharathidasan* and *Savarirayalu Naicker*.
5. Instituted literary award in the name of *Kamban* for best poems, short stories, drama and article.
6. Instituted an award in the name of Nehru for best children literature.
7. Instituted cash awards and titles *putuvaik kalai ma:maNi* for the scholars who excelled in the fields of literature, music, prose, dance, art.
8. Instituted medals and cash award to the senior scholars of literature for the languages Telugu and Malayalam, The titles viz *Tamil ma:maNi*, *Telugu ratna* and *malayala Ratna* respectively will be given.
9. Granting pensions to the age-old indigent scholars.
10. Organizing events like literary, meet, music & drama festivals to commemorate the birth and death anniversaries of the great personalities like *Bharathiyar*, *Sankaradoss Swamikal*.

11. Organizing cultural events like Tamil music festival, dance festivals, *cittiraikkalai vizha*, *Pongal Kalaivizha* in four regions of Pondicherry.

12. Organize classical and folk festivals for youth.

Apart from these, the Government of Pondicherry has issued orders with respect to the use of Tamil for signing official documents. It also initiated steps to implement compulsory Tamil medium education up to V Standard.

Academic Programmes

The following academic programmes are also implemented through various departments the Government:

1. Conducting of all-India seminars on national integration and multilingualism with special reference to literature.
2. Published glossary of technical terms of education department.
3. Teaching Tamil to non-Tamil govt. officials.
4. Published translation of Best literary Poems of the poets belonging to Pondicherry in to English.
5. Published the Private Diaries of *Sri Anandha Rangappa Pillai*

The activities of the government with respect to Tamil development aim at encouraging the scholars, Tamil tradition and entertaining the public through the medium of Tamil.

Modernization of Tamil – The Need of the Hour

A close examination of the actual practices of the Government in the light of language development theories will show the validity of these activities with regard to the development of Tamil.

Any planning with respect to languages can be done either by the government or by government-authorized individuals/groups.

Weinstein (1980:50) defines languages planning as the government-authorized, long-term-sustained and conscious efforts to alter the language's function in a society for solving

communication problems. The problems with respect to language's function and forms are solved by taking suitable policy decisions and proper implementation techniques.

In the case of Tamil, the planning efforts have to be directed towards modernizing Tamil to make it suitable for and efficient in expressing the modern concepts, while functioning in the new domains. Modernization of Tamil means attaining inter-translatability with the languages of the industrialized countries by developing new vocabulary for new areas of knowledge and new styles, and registers (Ferguson 1968).

Hence, introduction of Tamil in the new domains of activity and creation of technical terms, registers are some aspects of modernizing efforts, which are consciously planned. Whether the existing developmental programs of the government are directed in this direction remains doubtful or confusing in some aspects.

A study of the government policies and the demands put forwarded by the Tamil scholars clearly reveals that some of the policies are framed in accordance with the demands of the scholars.

Assessment of the Development Proposals of the Government

Furthermore, these programs may be analyzed also from the point of view of two theories, namely, the theory of instrumentalism and the socio-linguistic theory.

The theory of instrumentalism treats language as a tool or instrument, which implies that it can be evaluated, regulated and improved upon, and even new languages can be created. In this theory, the linguistic features are evaluated from the point of view of economy, objectivity, clarity, elasticity, etc. Modernization of languages is conceived as a tool for progress and, hence, script reforms, relaxation of spelling rules, simplification of sandhi and syntax, bridging the gap between speaking and writing, new vocabulary and writing in science, new forms of communication like letters, newspapers, magazines, etc. are emphasized.

But the activities of the Tamil scholars are not in this direction. They seem to demand sticking onto traditional grammar and rigid spelling and sandhi rules. Modernization exploits the dialectal sources for coining technical terms, even as it would derive from spoken language varieties. Tamil scholars of the Purist Movement in Pondicherry and Tamilnadu often look down upon these resources to some extent even now.

Non-literary Development

From the Tamil development programs adopted by the Government and suggested in the writings of the Tamil scholars, we could notice that the emphasis is on the literature, and literary aspects of Tamil. This reveals the fact that they equate literary development with the language development. In fact, literary development is only one aspect of languages development.

The real language development lays greater emphasis on the development of language (usually the non-literary styles) in practical domains. Creation of encyclopedias, compilation of dictionaries, translation of materials from diverse sources, creation of textbooks for all subjects, form major part of the language development process. These aspects are not highly emphasized in the idiom of these scholars. They give importance to Tamil, its tradition, grammar, music, and purism.

In this era of globalization and free trade explosion, Tamil has a vital role to play. Tamil should be developed in such a way as to suit this global need. Development of Tamil should not be a unidirectional as the scholars seem to emphasize, but it should be a multifaceted.

Sociolinguistic Theory and Language Development

In the socio-linguistic theory of language development, social aspects of the development language are given importance apart from the technical aspects. In this theory, languages are considered as symbolic system.

Most of the activities of the Government of Pondicherry are of sociolinguistic nature. It created lot of schemes for the development of Tamil including age-wise festivals to maintain the cultural tradition. These activities of the Tamil scholars with respect to Tamil development are considered as an effort of ethinization (Annamalai 2001). He states that the efforts of ethinization looked Tamil as a symbol for distinctiveness and mobilization and it focused on the continuity with its past with little changes as necessary, resisting and removing the influence of other languages as well as spoken Tamil in written Tamil, promotion of past literature through publication and political protection for the interests of Tamil language.

It is true that the agenda of the scholars is toward promoting the continuity of ethnic identity and retention and growth of literature and arts. But the characterization and description of these activities as excluding and avoiding any change is not correct.

Acceptance of changes in the forms and ideas are easy to identify even in versification, a place where the scholars could have easily enforced upon themselves and implemented their conservative ideas. But these scholars have accepted new forms of verses and new idioms not found in traditional literature and forms. They have accepted vocabulary of Tamil origin from many sources, including the colloquial and spoken styles and registers. R. P. Sethu Pillai, et al., has paid great tributes to the purity and richness of rural lexical items. It is very common in both linguistic and political circles to glorify common speech for its vitality, originality and purity. In addition, scholars have looked at certain caste dialects as providing real Tamil sources for professional terms, agricultural terms, kinship terms, etc.

The question of ethnicization may be more relevant only when ethnic identity is basically lost, which is not the case in Tamil. The goal is to go back to the glory of Tamil in its pure form, and

the development of the political unity among the Tamils. They seek to do it based on the ethnic identity Tamils already possess. Moreover, even if we assume the validity of the term used in the sense cited above and the process, “ethnicization,” is commonly found even in languages which do not care for any purism at all. So, the process of ethnicization appears to be somewhat out of place, when it is applied to the scholars of Purist Movement. They aim at purification, but demand the progress of the language within the purist idiom and parameters.

Conclusion

When we analyze the protest of the Tamil scholars in the signature issue, such a demand may look trivial. But this demand for a symbolic act has a deeper meaning, consequence and connotation. Tamil signatures become symbolic identification of Tamil use in the Government administration. Demonstrating adherence to the rule of signature in Tamil becomes the duty of every official since it is the official language of the Union Territory. It would have been better if the officials begin to sign in Tamil in the documents, not by force through government orders. However, this type of spontaneity is conspicuous by its absence. Certainly past practices and historical developments, not only in the Union Territory of Pondicherry but in all the states in India, impede such spontaneity.

Expecting governments to start and subsidize language development programmes has been the model in India since Independence. Such demands for government support for the growth and development of Indian languages including Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, Hindu and other languages were presented to and sometimes successfully obtained from the Government. There is room to change our posture in this important area of linguistic and cultural identity.

But, then, events are overtaking us rapidly with the ever-increasing realization of the importance of English in all walks of life in India. Helpless zealots of Indian languages will, it seems, continue to make demands on Governments at the Centre and the States, for the development of Indian languages, just as we find in Pondicherry and Tamilnadu. Half-hearted tokenism from governments will take over actual development and expansion of the domains of use for all the Indian languages, and pressure groups will continue their existence as mere pressure groups.

Language development activities of the governments may develop a kind of dependence on the government for the development of languages. Making Tamil as a resource for economic mobilization alone will develop a sense of positive attitude and identification with Tamil. To achieve this, multifaceted development of the Tamil by the participation of people with or without the government support is necessary.

Chapter 9

Futuristic Planning & Values of Tamil Language in Cyber Space

Love, Admiration and Loyalty for One's Own Language

Language is certainly a means of communication. Apart from this, language may have not much relevance to some speech communities. Some communities may employ language for nation building process. And yet there is no community which does not cherish their language in tender words and moments. Every community boasts about their language in times of crisis and adversity.

Thomas Carlyle's eulogy of the position of Shakespeare in England and among Englishmen borders on deification of the poet and consequent consecration of England. A section in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (1841), Carlyle writes in a language similar to the language Indians adopt to eulogize their ancient poets. In particular, such rhetoric is easy to come by among the Tamils relating to their ancient works of literature:

But call it worship, call it what you will, is it not a right glorious thing, and set of things, this that Shakespeare has brought us? For myself, I feel that there is actually a kind of sacredness in the fact of such a man being sent into this Earth. Is he not an eye to us all; a blessed heaven-sent Bringer of Light? (pp. 24-25) ... Which Englishman we ever made, in this land of ours, which million of English men we ever made, in this land of ours, would we not give up rather than the Stratford Peasant? ... He is the grandest thing we have yet done. For our honor among foreign nations, as an ornament to our English Household, what item is there that we would not surrender rather than him? Consider now, if they asked us, Will you give up your Indian Empire or your Shakespeare, you English; never have had any Indian Empire, or never have had Shakespeare? Really it were a grave question. Official persons would answer doubtless in official language; but we, for our part too, should not we be forced to answer: Indian Empire, no Indian Empire; we cannot do without Shakespeare! Indian Empire will go, at any rate, some day; but this Shakespeare does not go, he lasts forever with us; we cannot give up our Shakespeare! (pp. 27) We can fancy him as radiant aloft over all the Nations of Englishmen, a thousand years hence. ... wheresoever English men and women are, they will say to one another: "Yes this Shakespeare is ours; we produced him, we speak and think by him; we are of one blood and kind with him." (p. 29). **Thomas Carlyle on Shakespeare From The Hero as Poet. London: De La More Press, 1904**

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English and Tamil

With the expansion of the use of English language around the world, Englishmen rightly had some pride in the fact that their language is adopted by many nations around the world. At the same time, changes in the social and cultural trends among the native speakers of English require them to avoid linguistic jingoism. At present it is rather unusual for Englishmen to boast of their language as something unique, loveable, great, etc., Sometimes we assume that English is not subjected to such loyalty brimming with emotion. The quote from Thomas Carlyle clearly indicates that even industrialized nations have gone through this process of adoration of their language and poets, et al.

As for the Tamils, language has been considered more than a means of communication since early period. There are tender references to Tamil throughout the recorded history of Tamil literature. The relationship between Tamils and Tamil language is emotionally founded rather than on facts of instrumentality. The emotional attitudes were nurtured in the minds of people by imparting great values to Tamil. Sacrificing one's life for the sake of Tamil is not an unusual thing for them.

Goal: Study of the Computing Register in a Classical-Modern Language

In this context, this chapter tries to analyse the traditional values of Tamil, when it is used in cyber space activities, namely, Tamil computing. More specifically, this chapter tries to define the register of Tamil computing and values at each level.

Attributes to Tamil

The values of Tamil can easily be identified from the attributes given to the language, and the attitudes people have towards Tamil. Each attribute has certain connotation as follows. *taṇi* Tamil, *tu:ya* Tamil to show Tamil's uniqueness and to illustrate its independent function; *en* Tamil, *pain* Tamil, *ti:ṇ* Tamil to show its normative and refined characteristics; *tol* Tamil to illustrate its ancientness; *vaan* Tamil to refer to the richness of literature; *teyva* Tamil to equate it with Sanskrit which was attributed to be a divine language or language of gods; *kaṇṇit* Tamil to emphasize its virginity, uncorrupted and youthful characteristic of the language.

Attitudes

Apart from this attributes, there are certain attitudes prevailing among the Tamils regarding the origin, script and literature of the language.

As far as the origin is concerned, the attitudes reveal the belief that Tamil has a divine origin; it is the mother of all languages and Tamils are the earliest race in the universe.

At the script level, people believe that Tamil only possesses the sound 'Zh' which is called *cirappu zhagaram*.

The pride of Tamil is the possession of classical literature. The ethics, social values and culture of the people are reflected in the content of the literature at different periods. The attitude of Tamil scholars with regard to literature is such that they would like to have the dates of those literatures fixed as ancient as they could be.

What Do These Attributes and Attitudes Reveal?

Analysis of these attributes and attitudes show that the deification of the language and the Tamils dying to preserve and protect the language are also related to the political aspirations of various sections of the Tamil society. Ultimately it was/is perceived that political strength is necessary to protect, preserve and purify Tamil and make it the unquestioned leader. They desire for a strong socio-political status for Tamil and the Tamils led to the struggle against the linguistic imposition of Hindi in the name of its status as the official language of the Indian Union. However, with some measure of resolution of such issues (apparently resolved, but in reality so-called resolution is not significantly better than the previously existing political conditions), other challenges are seen to plague the use and status of Tamil language. Moreover, the present status of Tamil and its uses in the age of computing are very different from the traditional operation in familiar socio-political terms. It is interesting to study the changes in those values in the context of new uses of Tamil viz. information technology. This precisely is the focus of this chapter.

New Registers

Apart from the politically constructed attributes seen earlier, there are certain attributes in the modern Tamil based on the functions Tamil performs.

The attributes like a:ṭci Tamil 'Administrative Tamil', caṭṭa Tamil 'Tamil for law' KaṇiNit Tamil 'Tamil computing' are evolved when Tamil is introduced in the new domains of activity. New technical terms and sentence patterns are constructed to bring out the concepts and processes pertaining to those domains. This has led to the creation of new registers. Unlike earlier attributes, these attributes were derived from the structure and function of Tamil. Even though these new varieties are based on use and structure, there are differences between the varieties like a:ṭchi Tamil and kaṇiNit Tamil.

Computing Register

Computer is a multipurpose instrument used for communication. The primary purpose of computing is to store, process and transfer information between computers. No one could

imagine such a network would come to be used for human to human interaction. The new generation computer and its use are new to Tamil society. Hence the study of computer in addition to its application and use of Tamil in it should be included in the notion of kaninit Tamil.

Several Dimensions

The term kaniNit Tamil must include all aspects of activity in cyberspace in respect of Tamil. To capture the notion of Tamil computing the following dimensions may be distinguished.

1. Communication about computer through Tamil
2. Communication to computer through Tamil
3. Computer mediated Tamil communication

Communication about Computer through Tamil

The first dimension of Tamil computing is communication about computer in Tamil which deals with the study of computer and its applications. This study is similar to any other study of science in Tamil. It contains the technical terms, sentence patterns to explain about the subject, namely, the computer. Since this subject in Tamil is new, and the growth and use of it is fast, the technical terms are mostly borrowed from English.

The following types of coinages and standardization are in progress as noticed in some computer journals.

- i. The common computer language names and other international connotations are used as found in English: Fortran, Visual Basic, etc.,
- ii. Some coinages made in the subject using loan translation method are standardized due to the frequent use of these terms in newspapers and journals.

miṇ anjal	e.mail
miṇ vaṇikam	e.commerce
meṇ poruḷ	software
vaṇ poruḷ	hard ware

- iii. There are certain concepts and terms which are in the process of standardization due to the variation in usage.

iṇaiyam	vaḷaippiṇṇal	vaḷaithaḷam	‘internet’
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elipori cutti cottukku 'mouse'

The purity in the coinage of technical terms, grammar, etc. are not emphasized, unlike in the domain of other popular science writing for the reasons such as

1. The computer technology and its applications grow so fast to cope up with international competition by giving importance to the concepts rather than the Tamil terms.
2. The involvement of Tamil scholars are less in these areas of activity.

Communication to Computer through Tamil

The second dimension of Tamil computing is communication to computer through Tamil.

Generally the activity of computer is divided into three parts: input, process and output. The activities, input and process, may roughly be equated with the second dimension of Tamil computing.

The communication to computer through Tamil may take place through three devices called keyboard, Optical Character Recogniser (OCR) and natural speech. Since the research on OCR and speech recognition is going on at an international level the only available device to Tamil is keyboard. As for keyboard and Tamil script are concerned, there is much deviation in the values of letters of the script when compared with the earlier values.

The invention of scripts was a milestone in the communication process of human material civilization. The possession of script (writing system) by a language makes it powerful. The writing system not only has given some prestige and status to the language but also to the community which has it. The primary purpose of the script was to transfer one's knowledge to the following generation.

The history of evolution of the Tamil script shows that it was modified according to the materials used to write, such as palm leaves, typewriters, etc., Script reform was advocated earlier for achieving uniformity within the script system.

When Tamil letters began to be used in word processing, there developed several software programs resulting in several font varieties over and above the existing print varieties. These software programmes functioned mutually exclusive. So, if we send materials written using a particular software, receivers at the other end may not be able to get the material deciphered in Tamil using the Tamil script software they have in their computers. Considering the communication gap due to such variations, the Tamil Nadu government standardized the use of Tamil letters and adopted some common codes. The values of Tamil letters are changed in such a way that through the reform advocated for achieving uniformity for the letters of Tamil across various Tamil software programmes for better communication, started functioning as a tool for

the unification of Tamil communities in various countries through the standardization of the key board.

The next change is that the scripts used for local communication is to find its place in the international code (384 Unicode). The values of the letters has thus been enhanced to a symbol unification at an international level.

Communication to computer is done through some machine 'code' a representation of binary code representing the state of electrical symbols. Most of the computer languages such as Basic, Fortran, PASCAL have their own vocabulary and system which are close to English. Developing a compiler with close resemblance to Tamil is a type of communication yet to be achieved.

Analysis of Tamil through the available higher level language is another type of communication to computer. This processing includes Tamil word processing. Grammar and spell checker, text generation, frequency list, concordance collocations, Natural Language Processing, etc., In the above processes, the values of Tamil grammar and traditional analysis of Tamil are totally changed.

Tamil has an earliest grammar called Tolkappiyam. It describes Tamil phonology, verbs, nouns and other sandhi rules with certain semantic notions. Though it is a descriptive grammar, some scholars consider it as a prescriptive grammar since even now they wanted to follow the rules cited in it. Grammars were written by individuals like Tolkappiyar, Pavanandhi, etc., at different periods. They wrote their grammars with their institutive knowledge and perception of Tamil structures and meaning. Most of the grammars in Tamil are static, with fixed rules for a particular period and purpose.

But these grammatical rules and formalisms are not recognizable by the computers. Computers analyze language in terms of tags, dots, space, tokens and combination of tokens by matching these with larger corpora. The computational grammar will be a dynamic one with updating facility has to be written by not only the language experts but also with computer specialists.

Computer Mediated Tamil Communication

The third dimension of Tamil computing is computer mediated Tamil communication (CMTC). The computer is of great actual and potential use in a wide range of applications involving human language which includes stylistic studies, lexicography, textual editing, preparation and presentation of language teaching materials and translation activities.

These activities come under both computer mediated communication (CMC) and processing. Many scholars correlate this type of computer mediated communication as the proper 'register' for computers.

Herring (1996:1) described it as "communication that takes place between human beings, viz. the

instrumentality of computer in which participants interact by means of written word (e.g.) typing of message on the key board on one computer is read by others on their computer screens, either immediately or at a later point of time”.

Milena Collot (1996:14) coined a term viz., ‘electronic language’ by using the characteristics of this communication. She explained that electronic language is characterized by a set of situational constraints which set it apart from other varieties of language.

There are wide varieties of CMC genres in English which are of different kinds meant for local, global, academic and recreational domains. But, in the case of Tamil, the CMC is at an infant stage. Apart from browsing websites (World Wide Web), the chat, and e-mail communication through Tamil are in the developing stage. If these are developed, then there are potential chances for change in values in face to face communication and CMC.

There are some values which need to be addressed: to what extent does the computer medium alter human interaction and to what extent do people simply map their existing patterns of behaviour onto communication in the medium. The main loss of value in those activities is the fact that participants interact without the benefit of extra linguistics support as to gender, identity, personality etc., in CMC.

Language teaching is also a type of CMC which lacks many values when compared to traditional classroom teaching. The teacher in an actual teaching situation can give individual attention and can also act as a role model for the students. The computer mediated language teaching such as CALT, CALL are more of an impersonal nature and unsuitable for personal relationship. The materials are the outcome of the work of teams of experts in language teaching, computer experts and other multimedia specialists.

To Conclude

In conclusion, the Tamil computing register has to include all the activities performed using Tamil in the cyberspace. Tamil computing in all its perspectives has some impact on the values of language.

After analyzing the metaphor or attributes of Tamil cited in the beginning of this chapter, Annamalai (1999) stated that “the relation of Tamils with languages is emotionally defined and controlled and not rationally ... He added “That those metaphors further distance people from their language by making it as an object of worship and not an object of manipulation to achieve the goals set by socio-economic forces”.

This statement relating to the effect of such metaphors may not truly reflect the reality of the situation in Tamil in modern days. Innovations in technology, intended for application in Tamil, such as keyboard for Tamil typing, changes in incremental script reforms, and the enormous effort of software engineers of Tamil origin around the world were and are all motivated by their

earnest desire and effort to improve Tamil, their dear mother tongue. All the translations of scientific works done in early days, all the inventions and adoptions and adaptations of technology were induced by such earnest desire and love for Tamil by individual inventors. Statements from these pioneers clearly indicate that they labored with great devotion and love and admiration for Tamil.

But this being the age of information technology, the economic values dominates in all spheres of society. The traditional form language materials are reproduced unsuitable for the IT revolution. New forms of dictionaries, text books, teaching aids, translation tools and speech synthesizers are being produced in a competitive manner. The role of voluntary individual effort is being replaced by the desire to make a quick buck, which, however, is unavoidable, in modern societies. Intervention of government has not resulted in any great improvement to the availability of technology for the development of Tamil. It is good to see that Tamil expertise becomes entrepreneurship and hence the language becomes an instrument for economic benefits in cyberspace activity. It is difficult to predict whether identity issues and values hold their influence in this process. If there is no influence felt, it is the social development that should be criticized, reviewed and reinforced in favor of Tamil.

Change is Caused by Time, Not an Error: So says Nannu:!

The value of Tamil language also changed in the political front now-a-days. The Tamil Nadu Government started a Virtual University to address the concern of Tamils living abroad that there the cultural traditions and appreciation and adoption of Tamil culture have begun to lose their appeal among the younger generation.

Tamil is considered now as an instrument in integrating 75 million Tamils living in 40 countries. Tamil once protected and purified by loading so much values as a political construct, now become the symbol of culture for all Tamils living all over the world.

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