A SOCIOLINGUISTIC STUDY ON WOMEN'S LANGUAGEIN MATRILINEAL MALABAR MUSLIM COMMUNITIES OF KERALA

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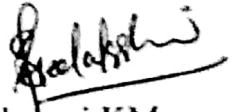New Delhi - 110 067

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DAT	Dative
EMP	Emphatic
FUT	Future
Mal	Malayalam
NEG	Negation
Pl	Plural
Pr/P	Person
PRES	Present
Pres.Conti	Present Contionous
PROG	Progressive
PST	Past
Ques	Question
Sg	Singular

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Feminism

The enquiry into the relation between language and gender in the field of linguistics has transformed the perspective in which language was studied in a gender neutral manner. Often bound with a set of norms based on gender, this sub−field of linguistics is studied in relation to society. In the present society, the question on gender and its importance prevails and it's hard to ignore the studies initiated in the field.

One of the earliest works on gender published in 1922 by Jack and Strauss's, *The Woman Book: Contains Everything a Woman Ought to Know,* talks about the character of women, and mentions the behavioural rules women ought to follow in order to exist in the society. Many books written in the earlier period were about women's characteristic. Much attention was not given to these earliest writings, perhaps, as they couldn't strongly prove their gender differentiated claims. Leading a new era of feminism, researchers like Lakoff, Holmes, and Cameron pointed out the multiple ways in which women are discriminated against in society. These writers were criticised for their feminist views; because they were women, they were seen as imperfect speakers and their behaviour terms 'unruly'.

Creating new waves in this field, the new paradigm of study raised crucial questions on the reflection of gender difference in the language and how language helped create and strengthen stereotypes; they also constructed new paradigms in the spoken language. These feminist writers critiqued the constructed discursiveness in the language with respect to masculinity and femininity.

 At the beginning of the first wave of feminism in this field, the concept of language and gender caught much attention after Robin Lakoff's work. Her well- researched work, *Language and Woman's Place* (1975), highlighted the relationship and the need to study both language and gender. This landmark work on language and gender relations has received much attention from both linguists and feminists across the world. Presently, it is considered as one of the seminal works on gender discrimination based on language. Lakoff, in her work, coined the term "woman's language". Through her seminal work, she has attracted many researchers, including linguists, to explore much on the field. Her work stresses on gender inequity and the need to study gender with respect to one's social status, age etc. The societies in which we live often see women as powerless. They are often seen as less than men in comparison to them. The patriarchy that still prevails in our society has strict rules for

women which they are required to obey. For example, women need to talk politely, obey orders, raise questions only in the form of requests, etc. Hence, they remain powerless and voiceless. Through a sociolinguistic study, Lakoff throws light on these issues. Her work classifies men and women's language through empirical evidence.

The studies conducted by famous sociolinguists, William Labov in *The Social Motivation of Sound Change in Martha's Vineyard* (1972) and Peter Trudgill in *The Social Differentiation of English in Norwich* (1974), primarily focussed on the speech difference in male and female English speakers. Even though these studies were carried out as a part of the sociolinguistic study, the results of the research show that a gender difference does exist in human speech. For example, the result of Labov's study shows that women tend to use the more standard or prestigious form of speech than men. Similarly, Trudgill's a phonological study on the final consonant words –ing or [ŋ] (velar nasal) production, it was found that women use a prestigious form of speech more often than men.

	Male	Female
Middle Class	96	100
Lower Middle Class	93	97
Upper Middle Class	19	32
Middle Working Class	9	19
Lower Working Class	0	3

Table 1.1: *(-ng) in Norwich by social class and sex for Formal Style (Trudgill. 1974a)*

In other words, gender difference always existed in human speech and the studies earlier conducted failed to identify the social motivation or social changes in human speech as a part of language and gender. This field of linguistics not only looks at how the language varies in two different genders but also looks into the cultural aspects of human speech.

The second wave of feminism was felt in the field through the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis and their theory in linguistics, which had emerging feminism underpinnings to it. To quote Sapir (1918), "Human beings do not live in the objective world alone or alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular

language which has become the medium of expression for their society." As humans, try to fit into society as we move on, we also modify the language with respect to society. This variation can be seen within the language i.e.as dialectal variation or as a new language. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, one of the main phenomena for the variation within language is social background. This variation occurs due to various reasons. Especially when we do research in linguistics, some of the important factors we, as researchers, need to look into include the social class, education, age, occupation etc, as these have a strong influence on the speaker's language. For example, the language spoken by two teenagers will be different from the language spoken by two housewives. Similarly, the language spoken by teenage boys and teenage girls will be different because all have been influenced by the aforementioned factors. In short, no two people speak exactly the same language.

Eminent grammarian Otto Jespersen published his work *Language: Its Nature, Development and Origin* (1922). To study the deep-rooted myth on language and gender, he used the deficit approach. According to him, social and cultural customs meant that sex and gender were embedded within the existing patriarchy in society. But the grammarian's study analyses women to be more elegant in their speech. They have a useless course of expressions and because of the non-refinement of women's speech men were forced to be restricted in their speech because of the 'boring' nature of women's conversations. His work more focus on the male speech and the "privileges" men in the society earn, leading to a much 'vigorous' and 'vivid' language ;it sees men as the 'chief renovators of language' and men as having a larger vocabulary (1922: 247-248). Critiquing the approach by Jespersen, Bellinda Mellor claims, "Jespersen's work, male language is normative and the language of others (the 'child', the 'foreigner' and the 'woman') is considered extra to that norm and, as such, deficient. However, any document read after a ninety-year lapse will deliver a new viewpoint on the original work and, although probably not considered a fault in his time, the first weakness of Jespersen's work is the perspective from which he writes." (Mellor,2011:1).

Presently, if we look into the Online Dictionary of Language Terminology (ODLT), it defines the term genderlect as "a variety of speech (i.e. a register or a sociolect) that is specific to either males or females" ("Genderlect", 2015). The term has been widely used by Deborah Tannen in her work. According to her, the "Genderlect Theory" points out that "men and women have a different way of making conversation, with neither one being the right one, or superior over the other; they simply are different." (Tannen, 1990) She also familiarised the

term "difference approach" through her work *You Just Don't Understand: Women and Men in Conversation* (1990). But in her study she herself has distanced from the dominance approach coined by Lakoff. She explains her approach, "Taking a cross-cultural approach to male-female conversations... without accusing anyone of being wrong or crazy." (Tannen 1990, 47) Therefore, in her work, she studied men and women in two separate groups. According to her, this is a much simpler way to study on the gender difference by letting them speak in their own groups. Supporting the arguments given by Lakoff on the difference and dominance by the male and female speech, Tannen stresses, "There are gender differences in ways of speaking." (1990:17) However, Tannen's research has attempted to provide a potential substitute for the "Dominance" approach. In the example, she claims that one of the reasons for 'women's' indirectness is presented not as a result of subservience but of sensitivity (1990, 225). Even though Tannen did her study on a small group of men and women, her work has played a significant role in the study of language and gender.

While the dominance and difference approach in the much discussed field of linguists remain relevant, Deborah Cameron, a linguist, has focussed on the gender stereotypes in society. She has divided the relation between language and gender mainly into three categories: dominance, difference, and deficit. She has categorised the research in this particular field of linguistics as one of the three categories. The linguist's notion of gender influence in language needs to be studied in a much deeper sense. Moreover, the earlier investigation was conducted by men including, Trudgill, Labov, Jespersen and so on. Tannen's study shows that the shifts in words, grammars in any language, when studied by men, is influenced by their deeper ideologies which are rooted in whatever form of patriarchy exists in the society at the time. Example, her "Deficit" approach stands in contradiction to the statement by grammarian Jespersen. As mentioned above, Jespersen thinks womenlack proficiency in learning a language. But it should be also noted that the limitations to the women's language were because of the social influence. Taking a glance at the past or present, it can be clearlyseen that the women were not liberated from the shacklesof patriarchy. Even the present scenario doesn't differ much from the past. As long as patriarchy exists in our society, women will beseen as weak and vulnerable. Lakoff's term "Dominance", too was derived with reference to the male domination. Because language variation is directly proportionate to the power structures. In short, the three variations of deficit, dominance, and difference entirely depend upon the physical manifestations of gender that are visible in the society, be men or women.

To quote Cameron, "If you support this conviction you believe that the reason for possible language differences between males and females are merely a result of their belonging in different cultures." (Cameron (eds), 1992. Nordenstam, 2003: 14-15)

In the research conducted by Holmes (1993), she refers to the Japanese example where different words with the same meaning are used distinctively by men and women.

Example: 1. Japanese women use the word 'ohiya' for water while men use the word 'mizu'.

In the above example, there is a complete transformation of the same term 'water' when people belonging to two different genders use it. Furthermore, in the studies conducted, it is said that women tend to use a more standard form of speech than men. According to the findings of Holmes, native speakers of Japanese don't consider terms like 'ohiya' and 'mizu' as gender differentiated terms. According to the native speakers of Japanese, 'ohiya' is a more "polite" term used to refer to water. The native's categorisation of a term as polite coupled with its linkages to a woman's speech, brings to the fore the existing "unsaid" rules that women have to follow in a language. The society imposes certain codes of conduct on women, such as requiring them to be more polite and gentle when they speak. It would be erroneous to dismiss Holmes' (1993) example from the Japanese language. In fact, the example accurately demonstrated gender differentiation in language but the native speakers or the interpreters failed to recognise it as such.

The third wave of feminism in the field of language and gender emerged through the Foucauldian discourse analysis and post structuralism. It became mandatory to study and understand the social organisation and political structure in which the gendered language is placed.

As mentioned earlier, in this chapter, when the studies were conducted on language, it was considered more as a sociolinguistics study, an important field of linguistics. Chambers (2010) mentions, "the rise of sociolinguistics as an academic discipline in the second half of the twentieth century marks one of the most significant developments in the history of language study" and "with the rise of sociolinguistics, for the first time in the history of language study there was a linguistic discipline that dealt with language as a variant, continuous and quantitative. Sociolinguistics has developed as a linguistic theory in which

the linguistic constituents (…) are variables and their combinatorial possibilities are constrained not only by co-occurring linguistic constituents but also by co-occurring social circumstances."(Chambers 2010: 11).

Furthermore, women tend to use the standard language more than men do. Climate (1997) believes that females generally use speech to develop and maintain relationships. They use language to achieve intimacy. Tannen (1990) states that women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy, while men speak and hear a language of status and independence.

1.2 The Situation in Kerala

In India, a major portion of the population follows the patrilineal system. Only 15% follows the matriarchal system. The relationship or the difference between patrilineal and matrilineal is important for one to know how the concept of gender has been constructed in society. In both these patrilineal and matrilineal systems, the bonds are defined through marriage. Through the marriage, the husband and wife's relation begins along with their family. The future generations of these couples trace their descent in either of these systems in which they live. The patriarchal and matriarchal system has to be followed by the children in terms of their inheritance. In the patriarchal, it is the father's side through which one traces their lineage, and in matriarchal it is the mother's side. Though the former system is common in the majority of communities in India, the latter is limited to a minority community. But the growing social situation in our country has changed the matrilineal communities. The communities that were matrilineal are now so only in name and land inheritance. The overpowering domination of the men over the decades has turned women into the subordinated character suppressing their rights. But it is also important for one to look upon how the situation of women existed or still exists in matrilineal communities.

Kerala is a Dravidian state situated in the South Western coast of the Indian peninsula. The state consists of 14 districts and the official language of the state is Malayalam. The districts are broadly divided into six regions namely: Southern Travancore (Trivandrum district), Central Travancore (Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha districts), Northern Travancore (Kottayam and Idukki district), Kochi (Ernakulam and Thrissur district), South Malabar (Kozhikode and Malappuram district) and North Malabar (Kasargod, Kannur, Wayanad districts).In Kerala, along with the official language Malayalam, there exist many other tribal

languages. These tribes are majorly located in the Wayanad district. The dialect spoken in the northern part of Kerala, also known as the Malabar region, is known as Arabi-Malayalam.

Historically, the Malabar region was with Tipu Sultan, the ruler of Mysore. It merged with the southern province after the British waged war against Tipu Sultan in the Anglo Mysore War in 18th century (Panikkar, 1992). Presently, the geographical area of Malabar consists of Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur, Kasargod, and Wayanad. The term Malabar was introduced by the ancient invaders. It is said that the term was widely used by the navigators from the Arab countries.

On 20 May 1948, the Portuguese invader, Vasco da Gama, stepped in Kappad, Kozhikode. Soon after the Portuguese invasion, Kerala became popular for its spices and foreign trade began to flourish. The Malabar region became one of the foremost trade hubs for pepper and other expensive jewels.

Muslims constitute 25% out of Kerala's total population. Presently, the majority of the population residing in the Malabar region is Muslim, also known as Mappila. A large number of Muslims settled in the Malabar coastal region in Kerala in order to carry out trade through the sea routes.

During the 7th century AD, Arab Muslims started to settle down in this coastal region. It is believed that Islam was introduced to the natives by these traders and the people of Malabar region were the first to adopt Islam. According to Lewis Moore (1870), "The term Mappila is bridegroom or son-in-law." (Moore, 1870: 13) It is also said that the term has other meanings too. As the Arabs settled in the coastal areas, they made marriage alliances with the natives to ensure their continued stay in the region. Most such alliances with the Arabs were formed with people from and the Thiyar community (also known as Ezhavas, occupationally toddy tappers) and the Mukkuvar (Fishermen) community. To quote Day, "Children born through these alliances never met their trader father and the new-born were identified through their mother's name. Hence, the people born from such alliances came to be referred to as "Mappila". "Ma" means mother and "Pilla" means child in Malayalam (Day, 1863: 366). According to the author of the Malabar Manual, William Logan, "The word Mappila is a contraction of maha (great) and pilla (child), honorary title, (as among the Nayars and

Christians in Travancore) and it was probably a title of honour conferred on the early Mohammedan immigrants." (Logan, 1951: 191)

It is believed that during the earlier period, people wanted to convert to Islam because of two major reasons. One is the economic prosperity and the flourishing trade across borders in Malabar. Secondly, the state of Kerala had a high incidence of caste discrimination. The lower castes were exploited economically and socially by the upper caste Nair and the Brahmins. As Gangadharan (2007) concludes, this deep-rooted caste system in the Kerala society might have compelled the disadvantagedcastes to convert to Islam. 16th-century Portuguese traveller, Gasper Correa, provides us with a reason for the Hindu-Muslim conversion, as he abbreviates, "By becoming Moors (Muslims) they could go wherever they liked and eat as they pleased. When they became Moors, the Moors gave them clothes and robes with which to clothe themselves." (Correa, 1849: 155f) According to SM Muhammed Koya (1979), along with the lower castes in the Hindu society, a large group of Nairs and Brahmins too have also adopted Islam as their religion. The Koyas settled in Malabar region are one such group which converted to the new religion. In short, people during the 8th and 9th century AD has converted because of socio-economic reasons. The backwardness of the natives in Kerala who lived under the adherence of Chathurvarna system received great encouragement from the Arabs traders leading to a large number of socially deprived people converting into this new religion.

The new religion, Islam, introduced to the country by the Arabs also brought with it a patriarchal system, as it was followed in the Arabian countries. It followed a structure with extended family, where men can marry more than once, while women cannot; patriarchy was the base of their kinship. To recapitulate Philipe Fragues (2003), "That system rested on two pillars: younger brothers' subordination to the eldest brother in sibling relationships, and girl-women subordination to males within the family or marriage unit. Fertility decline undermines the first pillar. The modern trend towards two-child families – on average a boy and a girl – quite simply lessened the scope for a hierarchy between brothers, for lack of brothers. (2003: 47)."

The newly converted natives in Kerala were not familiar with this new system. They followed a matrilineal system, especially the Koyas in Malabar. Needless to say, they refused to uproot their old customs,].In fact, they have managed to retain their old traditions. As SM

Muhammed Koya points out, "The matrilineal kinship system was adopted by North Malabar Mappilas from the Nayar community probably as a result of intermarriage and conversion. It is supposed that the development of the system may have been associated with the Nayar practice of polyandry, helping to ensure that family descent would follow the blood." (1979:419)

The Mappila in the Malabar region spread over in Kozhikode, Kannur, Malappuram, and Kasargod. They include Sunnis, Keyis, Koyas, Ossans, Thangals, Nainar and Puslan. The social structure with which the matrilineal communities, especially the Koyas in Kozhikode and Keyas of Thalaserry, follow is much closer to the system followed by the Nayars. To draw an example; both the communities call their ancestral residential place as *tharavaad*. The communities from *tharavaad* region follow a joint family system with the eldest male member in the family as the *karanavan*.

Similar to the Hindu caste system, the Muslims in Kerala too segregated people on the basis of wealth. The Thangals among them are considered as superior due to the position they hold in the religion. Keyis, Koyas and Baramis were economically superior. Pusalars and Ossans occupied inferior status on the basis of their occupation. (Kutty, 1972)

Interestingly, the women didn't have to leave their residence post marriage. After the wedding, it's the man who had to relocate himself to his in-laws' residence. Unlike the tradition that has been followed by other Muslims in India, the system followed by Malabar Muslims differs. One of the reasons for such relocation is mentioned by Gough (1961). He argues, "Matrilineal related men began to come together to initiate business in modern marketing conditions. Sometimes *tharavaad* funds were also used for starting a business. It was then necessary to sign the documents by all adult members of both sexes stating that they would accept the responsibility of losses together." (Gough, 1961)

In 1983, the Gopal Singh Committee[1] instituted by the Government of India declared Muslims as one of the backward communities in India. It was not only the socio-economic situation all over India that contributed to this backwardness, it was the position of the Muslim women in particular. These women remained as invisible workers in public domains.

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[1] http://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in/sites/default/files/volume-1.pdf

Another reason is the early marriage of the girls. Muslim girls in Malabar region earlier married between the ages of 9 years and15 years. But the husband and wife stay together only after the woman attains puberty. Presently, the marriageable age of a Muslim girl in Kannur and Calicut is between 15years and 22years (after puberty). Earlier in the matrilineal communities of Malabar once a girl gets married to the man, she was considered as having crossed an important milestone in her life. These young girls were educated in Madrassa till their marriage. Their life was completely sheltered with no exposure to the world outside their community; in fact, their world was limited to their family members or relatives. Before this, when the families followed a strict matrilineal system, the women were in control of the house and the eldest woman was the head of the family and the decision maker. Due to the influence of the patrilineal system in adjacent societies, the power held by women even in matrilineal communities got slowly eroded. Only the women from the older generations hold the power as decision makers but the present generation women are taught to be 'obedient', 'polite', 'soft-spoken', in short, the 'perfect' women. To summarize the present Muslim women's status, I turn to author Leela Menon who, in her article 'Kerala Calling' writes boldly on the subject,

> Marriage is the ultimate goal, and the woman who is unmarried has no social status. She has been trained and socialized to be subordinate to male. Blind obedience to male is the prescribed social norm. No woman wants to excel because it could elevate her socially and she wants to be below her husband in social and official status to preserve his ego. (March-2004:5-13)

One of the famous dynasties of North Malabar is the Arakkal dynasty. This dynasty is the lone Muslim dynasty in Kerala. In Arakkal dynasty, the senior most man and woman are given the power to take the decision and can adorn the position of the ruler. The male ruler of this dynasty was Ali Raja and female ruler was Arakkal Beevi. From historical documents, it is known that during the 7th century, it was not uncommon for Muslim communities to have a woman as a ruler and as the decision maker.

The voices of the women in these communities were not suppressed. In fact, the matrilineal females were known for their strong voice as decision makers. Unlike other Muslim communities in Kerala (towards the southern part of Kerala) the women in these matrilineal communities were given the right to divorce their husband, termed as fasaha and they could

marry another man. Once the woman gives divorce to her first husband, he could claim no rights over anything, including his children. The children were to be brought up in the *tharavaad* (maternal home) of their mother.

Presently, the Muslims in Kerala follow both patrilineal and matrilineal system. The matrilineal system is followed mostly by the Muslims in Malabar region, majorly in Kannur and Calicut districts. The matrilineal system is also being followed in Lakshadweep islands. This island is mostly constituted of Koyas. The prominent features of the matrilineal system followed in Malabar include matrilocal residence and matriarchal joint family. A large number of Muslims in North Malabar follows *marumakkathayam*. The Muslims of North Malabar live in *tharavaads*, which consist of a large number of family members, right from the eldest to youngest generation, descending from the female line. Earlier in the matrilineal community, the women were the power- holders in the household. Now with the changing in the social context, women no more hold the power as the decision makers of the family and everything is decided by the eldest male member i.e. *karanavar*.

1.3 Map of Malabar
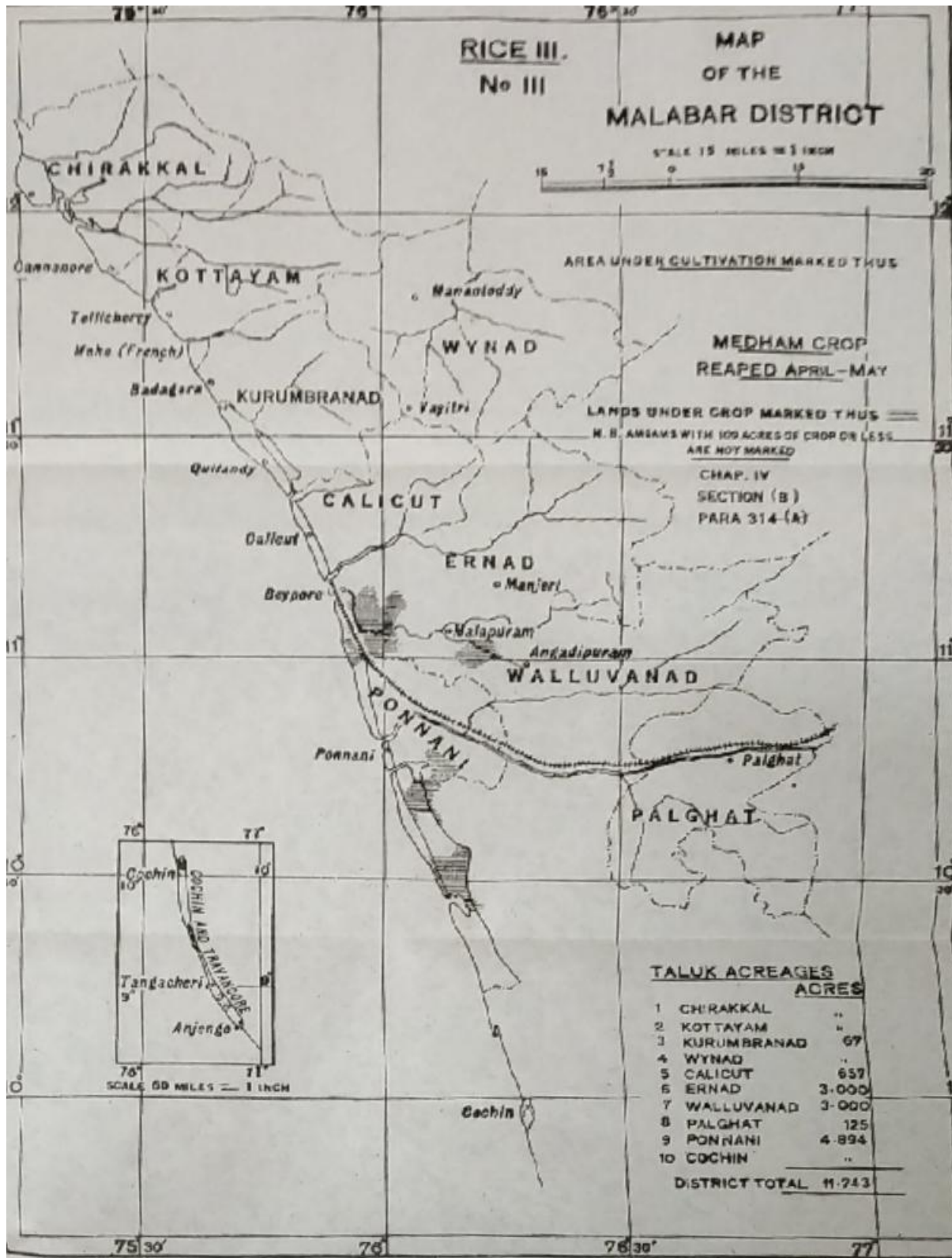
Fig 1: Map of Malabar district during the British rule. Malabar Manual Vol.I, William Logan (1887)

Fig 2: Political map of Kerala with districts. The study was conducted in Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur, and Kasargod districts.

1.4 Objective of the study

The study on language and gender is incomplete without defining and contesting the different waves in this field. The first wave in the field of language and gender not only conceptualised but also analysed the multiple paradigms by creating its own data. The second wave studied the language through a qualitative approach and defended the data factually. It is imperative that we to study the approaches through an interpretive tool for a better understanding of the femininity and masculinity existing in the language. The main objective of the research is to analyse the language of the matrilineal Muslim women in Malabar and also to understand the gender variation in their speech, through a sociolinguistic study.

The Arabi-Malayalam spoken in the Northern part of Kerala contains its own story, beginning from the Arabs who came there through the earlier trade, and continues to include all the modernisation in it. The study will focus on the gendered language differences in various contexts like private and public sphere. Most importantly, society assigns both the genders certain roles and conversational styles; variation in both these genders will rectify the existing male-female language inequality.

People are mostly familiar with the patriarchal system but not with the matrilineal system, especially in the context of Muslims. Largely, the matrilineal system in Kerala is often associated with the Nayar community, a Hindu sub-caste. Contextualising the case of Malabar Muslims, a huge decline in their matrilineal system is presently seen. Along with this decline of power the community also imposes certain roles on women. Taking into account the linguistic disparity and the "roles" assigned to each gender, the study aims to highlight the lexical usage, production of speech sounds, etc.

Further, the roles assigned to the gender lays bare the social construction of gender in the difference between its feminine and masculine manner of speech. It is also important to look at the existing sociolinguistic norms and its construction of this gendered variation through a discursive approach.

To summarise the objectives of the study:

1. The study will look into the speech difference in both male and female.

2. How the language and roles of the male and female is associated with a certain gender through their assigned roles.

3. Women are often seen as the interrupters of conversation. Through a quantitative approach, the study will analyse the level up to which women can be considered the interrupters.

1.5 Methodology

This study attempts to explore the women's language in the matrilineal Muslim societyin Malabar. The researcher, through the study, looked into the various factors influencing the Malabar dialect and the difference in the variation of their language in relation to the gender.

The study was conducted in different parts of Malabar where matrilineal society still existed. People settled across Malabar were consulted for the research. For this research, the researcher has mainly visited three districts in Malabar that are, Malappuram district, Kozhikode (Calicut) district, and Kannur district. One of the major areas of the study was conducted in Thalassey, in Kannur district, since it strictly follows the matrilineal system even today.

The participants of the study varied in two different age groups. The first set of participants included women between the ages 18-30 years, which the researcher calls the present generation due to their exposure and access to education and the world beyond their communities. The second sets of participants are called the older generation, aged between 65-85 years.
Apart from interviewing the women, men were also included in the study for analysing the language difference.

The younger generation of the matrilocal Malabar Muslim community is in the midst of both the patriarchal system and matriarchal system; the older generation, on the other hand, has only lived and seen only matriarchy for most of their life. In case of the younger generation, even though their community follows the matrilineal system presently, women live under the rule of their husband and live a submissive life. The older generation of the Malabar community led a life where women were dominant and the decision makers of the family. So the study's inclusion of both the participants over a period of time also provides an insight

into the gradual change that came about this community in the last few decades. Moreover, the study also looks at how the dominant females' language changed into a submissive's language and came to be seen as a marker of "polite, well-behaved, good family or cultured girl/woman."

The data collected during the research period was majorly through person to person interview. Since the community is also reluctant to open up about their practices on a personal basis with the interviewer, group discussions among the women in the community were encouraged. Moreover, the group discussions were seen as more beneficial for the data collection as the women in the community could relate to their past and present life and the changes within the community and language that occurred over time.

The data collection on a group of females and males would be also carried out after they were given a topic related to their past or present use of language. A group discussion among the females itself will be more effective as they could debate, discuss and compare their past and present life. This would also be a more natural conversation than a simple interviewer-interviewee method.

Procedure

The study is mainly focused on the women speakers in matrilineal Muslim communities in Malabar. During the first set of interviews, the people were provided with questionnaires. But most of the participants seemed to be reluctant to fill out the forms. So the research was attempted through interviews. Since the community is conservative, most of the women were unwilling to sit for the interview. The purpose of the research was explained to the participants in general. At the beginning of the research, an effort was made to make the participant aware that the study was especially on the female language as it is different from the males. Some participants were not convinced by the fact that women's language differs from the men and they refused to participate in the research.

Later, in the field study, they were made aware that this research is on women's language which connived most of the women participants, especially the old generation. The interviews of the participants were recorded during the study. The interviews began with collecting the basic details of the participants like name, age, education, family background etc. The women were asked to tell about their community and the history of their community and so on as per their knowledge.

At some of the houses visited during the study, especially in Thalassery, there were joint families. In such a situation, group interview method was used. During the group discussions, the participants had a natural conversation and there was less need to ask question about their language. One-on-one interviews were done within a period of 45 minutes- 60 minutes. As group interviews had more participants, the data collection lasted from1 hour to 2 hours.

1.6 Chapterization

The research work will be divided into four different sections.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The concept of language and gender is not much discussed in the field of linguistics especially in the context of India. Even though the question of gender is widely discussed, researchers fail to study the link between language and gender. Hence, it is important to discuss this topic. The first chapter of this research will provide a brief introduction to the concept of language and gender. Beginning with the evolution of the study in this field, the chapter will also briefly discuss what researchers need to specifically study this particular field of linguistics.

The chapter will introduce the concept of language and gender with reference to the studies conducted by various linguists including Lakoff, Cameron, Jesperson, Labov, Trudgill, Tannen and others. A historical perspective of the community being studied, and a look at the present situation of women, will also be introduced in this chapter. This chapter will also explain the scope and objective of the study, and discuss the research methodology.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

The second chapter of this thesis will be divided into two sections. The first section of this chapter will be looking especially into the theoretical studies. It will focus on the evolution of the field of language and gender and its history along with the initial debates on this emerging field.

The beginning of the second session of this chapter will look into the matrilineal communities in India, including the Khasi tribes of Meghalaya. Further, the literature review session will provide a brief history and evolution of the matrilineal Malabar Muslims along with the patrilineal Muslim communities. In short, this chapter will focus on the various

debates and various perspectives conducted by various researches, till present, on women's language and the research community.

Chapter 3: Conversational Style

This main chapter will look into the gender difference in the language of matrilineal Muslim women through a conversational style/ analysis. The chapter will analyse the production of speech by both men and women in different contexts, including the private and public sphere. The society often restricts woman from initiating the conversation. Through the study, the chapter will look into the existing norms that restrict women from being the initiator of speech. Further, the research chapter answers the multiple topics of discussions by both the genders in different settings to ultimately reassert that the society always assigns certain roles and topics for discussions specific to each of the genders and propagates inequality through it. It is often stereotyped that women interrupt the smooth conversation to seek attention. Through a qualitative and quantitative data analysis, the chapter seeks to break such stereotypes about gender and language.

Chapter 4: Linguistic features

The second main chapter of this research will look into a major portion of the linguistic feature of the community including phonology and morphology. This chapter is completely based on the data recorded through interviews and natural conversation. Further, the chapter will include the data analysis of the research work conducted.

Chapter 5: Sentence formation

This chapter will explore the language used by the community in a detailed way, analysing the production of sentences i.e. tag questions, use of hedges by women, lexis, pragmatic and terms of address and reference by the women.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter will conclude the results and the findings of the study conducted among the matrilineal Muslim women in the Malabar region.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Language and Gender

It is believed that the studies on variation in language of males and females were first conducted in the 19th century by Chamberlain (1912). In his review of *Woman's Language*, he draws example from a French missionary, Raymond Breton, in the dictionary of *Carib*, where he shows the relevance of gender variation in speech. It is said that the variations in the Carib language emerged as a result of the war (Chamberlain, 1912). Rochefort (1666) describes the situation of the gender variation as, "In the first place, the men have many expressions proper only to themselves, which the women understand well enough, but never pronounce: And the women have also their words and phrases, which if the men should use they would be laughed at; whence it comes, that in this discourse one would think the women spoke a language different from that of the men, old" (Rochefort 1666: 261). However, Chamberlain refused to believe that a change in the gender variation is speech was completely the result of war or abduction of women. In fact he strongly believed that the reasons would be much more. Borrowing the findings from Sapper (1897), Chamberlain stressed that one of the main reasons is the "socio-economic factors and differentiation in occupation and labour".

According to him, " Religious and animistic concepts in woman's sphere of thought may also have had some influence here; likewise the play-instinct, which often makes itself felt longer in woman' (Chamberlain 1912: 579).

Drawing examples from Fritz Kraus, a German ethnologist, Chamberlain stresses on the insertion of /k/, an intervocalic sound in women's speech. He quotes, "Dr Krause... cites the rest of the Caraya Indian Pedro, who said one day that Dr Krause's companion, Francisco Adam, "was a woman", because he pronounced the Brazilian word jacuba (a kind of drink), not saúba, as a man would have done, but sãkúbãafter the fashion of the women' (Chamberlain 1912: 580).

Kira Hall in her paper on *Exceptional Speakers: Contested and Problematized Gender* (2003), discusses of, "non-Indo-European "women's languages" and "men's languages" in the first half of the twentieth century where the "effeminate man" or "mannish woman" appeared in the footnotes as strange and deviant exceptions to an otherwise unshakable linguistic dichotomy" (2003: 200). In short, the cross-gender language which is being constructed to

promote the gender variance between the western and non-western cultures/ civilizations and "double-dichotomy" are a product of such cultural exoticism between opposite genders.

Hall analysed Chamberlain's /k/ as, "the anecdote underscores the separateness of the two varieties, since a male speaker who crosses the linguistic divide will not just be seen as womanly or effeminate; he will actually be a woman. The resulting portrait of women's and men's language use is rigidly dichotomous, so much so that a speaker's use of the "other" variety changes his sex altogether in public perception" (2003:222).

Later, Otto Jespersen (1922) in his work, *Language: Its Nature, Development, and Origin* borrowed the term "woman's language" from the works of Rochefort. His writings on woman's language gained attention. As Cameron (1990) recalls, Jespersen's work refers to woman's language as "linguistic other"(Hall 2003:223) and his chapter *The Woman* has no corresponding chapter titled *The Man* (1990: 43). In Jespersen's view there is an "extreme phonetic differences existing in non-European languages give way to "very few traces of sex dialects in our Aryan languages" (1990 [1922]: 206). However, disagreeing with the claims of Jespersen, Hall argued "the divergent uses of vocabulary and syntax that Jespersen subsequently identifies are then theorized not as sociological, but as cognitive, psychological, and personal" (2003: 224).

Jespersen's work faced huge backlash from people especially feminists for stereotyping the gender. One of the major drawbacks of his work was, he failed to study a particular community for his research, and rather his data was based on the writings including novels.

 Jespersen (1922) claimed that women need to be more elegant in their speech. They have a useless course of expressions and because of the non-refinement of women's speech men were forced to be restricted in their speech because of the 'boredom' nature of women's conversations. He was criticised for his overt prejudice towards women.

Later on, in an article by Jespersen (1949), he refers to women's linguistic features with the use of hyperboles, adjectives and adverbs in their speech. While both men and women use adverbs and adjectives in their speech, the intensity of the terms is more used by the women.
Ex. 2 : A) use of adverbs : awful, pretty, terrible, nice quite
(Jespersen, 1949)

Along the same period, Edward Sapir (1929) studied the different forms of language use by both males and females in a native American Indian community, Yana. His study classified the variants of speech and the use of poly-syllabic words present in the grammar of the community. According to Sapir, "the male and female forms tend to augment words e that the "possibly the reduced female forms constitute a conventionalised symbolism of the less considered or ceremonious status of women in the community... which contrasts in many ways with the parallel system of forms used by males in addressing males" (Sapir, 1929 [in Mandelbaum, 1963: 212]). Moreover, the variation in the speech of male and female were identified through the use or production of sounds and words. Example: the use of questions, possessive markers, case markers etc in their speech.

Sapir in his work provides with examples where sex-variant are present in the speech. Through his studies Sapir claims that it is the historical deviation that leads to variation in the speech. In Sapir's view, "Possibly the reduced female forms constitute a conventionalised symbolism of the less considered or ceremonious status of women in the community Men, in dealing with men, speak fully and deliberately; where women are concerned, one prefers a clipped style of utterance!" (1949 [1929]:212). However, Hall (2003) disagrees to the arguments put forward by Sapir. Critiquing it Hall says, "Women cannot win in these early texts: when their language forms are discussed as fundamental or older, they are theorized as conservative and archaic in comparison to their more innovative and youthful male counterparts; when their language forms are discussed as derived or newer, they are theorized as psychologically deviant or otherwise abnormal. The simple fact that so many of the early articles on sex differentiation in language carry the title "Women's Speech" or "Women's Language" points to an understanding of male speech as the language and women's speech as a kind of oddity" (2003: 225).

After Sapir's analysis on the women's language, more than a decade later, Mary Hass in her article on *Men's and Women's Speech in Koasati*(1944), argued that the sex-variants in the speech also exist in the form of morphosyntax and phonology. Her fifteen years of study on Koasati, a Muskogean language in spoken in South Western Louisiana (1944:142) explains the variance in the speech of both female and male. Considering the variance in speech, Haas(1944) said, "if the women's form ends in a short or long vowel plus one or two consonants, the men's form adds an *s* except under the following circumstances: when the

women's form ends in *t*, rule 2; when the women's form has the falling pitch-stress on its final syllable and ends in a short vowel followed by 1, rule 4; when the women's form has the falling pitch-stress on its final syllable and ends in a short vowel followed by *n*" (1944: 143). Given below is the example she draws to validate her claims:

lakdaw	lakdwas	'he is lifting it'
lakdawwitak	lakdawwitaks	'let me lift it'
mo'l	mo'dls	'he is peeling it'
lakadwwilit	lakadwwilic	'I lifted it'
i'p	i'ps	'he is eating it'
ta't	ta'ts	'he is weaving it'
taci'lw	tacitlws	'you are singing'
iltoli'hn	iltoli'hns	'we are working

"This completes the rules governing the differences between the speech of men and of women. The table below summarizes these rules by showing in condensed form the final part of the word. Note that /a/ vowel stands for any vowel, /k/ for any consonant, while other letters and diacritics have their proper phonetic value" (1944: 144).

To validate her arguments, Haas in her paper draws example from Sapir's study on Yana along with Thai and Chuckchee (Chukchi), a language of Eastern Siberia. She concludes through her study that the variants in the language with gender also depend on the perception of the speaker and listener.

Following the sex-variance in the speech by Haas and others, couple of years later Flannery(1946) published her article titled *Men's and Women's Speech in Gros Ventre*. Before Flannery, research was earlier done on this Native American Indian community by Kroeber(1916). Though Kroeber's field work was focussed on the speech forms of male, he failed to discuss on the phonetic system. Flannery through her study focussed on the phonetic difference that existed between the two speech forms. She described the phonetic difference as "the affricates tc, dj (ty) pronounced by men become velar stops when pronounced by women (k before e and i and in final position and ky before a, ae, ʌ)" (1946: 133-134). Along with differentiating the variation, her study has also taken an account of the non-verbal communication and gestures. Flannery in her paper has also mentioned about the bitter part

that existed in the Gros Ventre community where an old woman was socially boycotted from their community.

"A much older woman said that if a member of either sex "talked like the other" he or she was considered bisexual. This she illustrated by telling of the mortification suffered by the parents of a boy who persisted in acting like a girl in every way. The boy's mother was so sensitive that she never went about and she just bowed her head in shame when her son was heard talking like a woman" (Flannery, 1946: 135)

Similar to the existing norms on gender, the Gros Ventre community is also influenced by these cultures. From the day men are born, they are given and taught to live a privileged life. Paul Furfey(1944) in his work *Men's and Women's Language*, describes about the gender differentiation in the speech. Furfey's example from Indo-Aryan Language Bengali, "women, children and the uneducated classes often pronounce /n/ for /I/ in initial position" (Furfey,1944: 219). Producing more examples from different languages, Furfey argues, "In Zuni (New Mexico) "there is considerable variation in the speech of different groups, e.g., men and women and old and young," but she does not specify the nature of these differences. Among the Eskimo of Baffin Land men formerly pronounced "at" in certain situations where women pronounced "an n" (Furfey, 1944:219).

'If women speak and hear a language of connection and intimacy,' a clash of conversation styles can occur, when confronted with a men's language concerned with status and independence. (Tannen 1990). Thus the debates in this field of linguistics arose during the mid-twentieth century. Robin Lakoff's work *Language and Woman's Place* (1973) invited more people to explore on this field, it was not the first work done on language and gender. But Lakoff's work was not the first to look into the much discussed topic language and gender.

One of the prime reasons for that influence on language is the social factors including social class, the background of the speaker-education etc. The studies conducted by the researchers intended to show the correlation between the social background and how the class influenced the variable. William Labov in his study "The social motivation of a sound change" at Martha's Vineyard (1963) and "The social stratification in New York city" (1966), analysed gender as a crucial element that influenced the speaker's choice of variations/ sounds.

Labov's study explained the various sociological factors that influenced the speaker's language attitudes. Keeping the background of the speaker in mind Labov's study argued that variants in the speech was more found in women than men. Women used more hyper corrections in their speech than men. Also the hypercorrection was mostly seen in the lower middle class than in middle class. The tendency to shift the variants by the lower middle class women to the higher class is a result to attain social status in the society. In short, his study captured the factors influencing language. Eckert (2005) saw these studies as "capturing the vernacular, the ingrained patterns found in the individual's most unreflective speech, and the source of regular linguistic change" (2005:3).

Labov in his study on New York City (1966) referred to the informants as a "speech community". The term speech community itself has been given various definitions by the linguists based on their studies. Lyons (1970) defined speech community as "All people who use a given language or dialect". This definition was rather simple and general with the focus on a given language or dialect. While Fishman (1971) saw it as a sub classification of the community "all of whose members share at least a single speech variety and the norms for its appropriate use". In this definition, he put forward the concept of speech variety and norms of usage which was a great step forward." Labov defined the speech community as the "Participation in a set of shared norms; these norms may be observed in overt types of evaluative behaviour, and by the uniformity of abstract patterns of variation which are invariant in respect to particular levels of usage" (1972:116).

Further, Labov states, "That New York City is a single speech community, and not a collection of speakers living side by side, borrowing occasionally from each other's dialect, may be demonstrated by many kinds of evidence. Native New Yorkers differ in their usage in terms of absolute values of the variables, but the shifts between contrasting styles follows the same pattern in almost every case. Subjective evaluations of native New Yorkers show a remarkable uniformity, in sharp contrast to the wide range of response from speakers who were raised in other regions" (1982:5).

However, Labov's observations and arguments on the New York speech community were countered by many researchers as it failed to look into the smaller categories that influenced the community speech. Another drawback of Labov's study was the classification of the gender and class. For his study the deciding factors were the indicators which were

"determined on a scale of 8-10 levels in the survey, and then grouped into four broad categories" (1982: 138). Education, income and employment became the deciding factor for the social class but one of the failures thatLabov did in his study is the way he analysed people on the basis on employment. While studying in New York City, Labov has certainly gathered the occupational details of the informants but he failed to identify that a person educationally qualified might have an occupation lower than his education.

Analysing the study by Labov, Eckert and McConnell Ginet (1998) said, "His [Labov's Martha's Vineyard] study captured the intersection between interest, activity, and viewpoint that underlies a community of practice; and one can assume that the practice that unites these communities includes not only ways of talking, but also activities, dress (and other patterns of consumption), concerns, and topics of talk" (1999: 191).

To quote Eckert (2005), "The survey method's primary virtues are coverage and replicability, both of which depend on the use of pre-determined social categories and fairly fleeting social contact with the speakers that represent those categories. As a result, the social significance of variation can only be surmised on the basis of a general understanding of the categories that serve to select and classify speakers. This led, above all, to a treatment of variables as markers of primary categories – class and gender" (2005:1).

According to phonetician O'Conner (1973), the pronunciation of sounds reflects the social marker of our social status. Trudgill's study on Norwich (1974) is an example of the representation of social status by the speakers in our society. The phonological features vary in every language depending upon its users. Broadly, the difference in the female's language is categorized on the basis of phonology, pitch, intonation etc.

In Peter Trudgill's study on the English language in Norwich, the females the production of *[ŋ]* sound (-ing), was more used amongst the men.

Ex. i) Women pronounced the word *working* as [ˈwɜ:kin*g]*
Men pronounced the word as *[ˈwɜ:kin]*.
There exists a difference in the men's and women's speech i.e. *[ŋ]* and *[n]* difference.
Ex. ii) In English, the word *home*; men tend to pronounce the term as *[ˈɜʊ*m], where the initial sound *[h]* is left unpronounced, while women pronounce it as *[hɜʊm]*.

Both Labov and Trudgill's study claimed that more than stylistic and linguistic variable differentiation, the evidence is on how language and gender vary depending upon the social status.

Even though, the variation in the speech in both the gender were conducted by researchers like Labov and Trudgill, it was during the 1970's that the major theories on the issues of gender were developed. Lakoff's seminal work, *Language and Woman's Place* (1973) stressed on the woman's language. Her work mentioned about then time existing social reality where women's speech was being curbed by the men. For Lakoff (1973), women are considered to be powerless in their conversation because they are conditioned to be soft spoken and polite. As per her observation one of the reasons for women being powerless is "because of the way she speaks, [she] will be accused of being unable to speak precisely or to express herself forcefully" (2004:41). Further in her arguments, Lakoff stated that the frequency in questions women ask is the result of the insecurity that they face from the society. Moreover, men perpetuated their superiority over women in a much "stifling, exclusive and oppressive manner" (2004:102).

Over the time the research on language and gender entered into a much deeper debate and also the theories on women's language. One of the theories Lakoff perpetuated was the dominance theory, which describes the language of women as incompetent.In short, it emphasised that the subordinate gender i.e, women lacked in many characteristically features which men benefitted and made them as the dominant.

Lakoff stressed that "women are person-oriented, interested in their own and each other's mental states and respective status, men are object - oriented, interested in things in the outside world. Men enter in to bonding relationships of camaraderie in a way that they do not with women nor do women really with one another:' (1975: 101).

In short, Lakoff's theory was more concerned with the disparity between both the sexes in terms of power. It was the male-dominated society than pressurised women act in a "feminine" and in more subordinate manner. One of the draw back for Lakoff's work or criticism she faced was she depended heavily her individual observation and it lacked empirical evidence. Fasold (1990) said, "Lakoff's definition of 'woman's language'-both languages used to describe women and language typically used by woman (1990:103).

Nonetheless, based on her observation Lakoff categorises women's language based on their linguistic features:

1. Lexical hedges or fillers, e.g. you know, sort of, well, you see.

2. Tag questions, e.g. she's very nice, isn't she?

3. Rising intonation on declaratives, e.g. it's really good?

4. 'Empty' adjectives, e.g. divine, charming, cute.

5. Precise colour terms, e.g. magenta, aquamarine.

6. Intensifiers such as just and so, e.g. I like him so much.

7. 'Hypercorrect' grammar, e.g. consistent use of standard verb forms.

8. 'Super polite' forms, e.g. indirect requests, euphemisms.

9. Avoidance of strong swear words, e.g. fudge, my goodness.

10. Emphatic stress, e.g. it was a BRILLIANT performance.

(cited in Holmes 2001:286)

The Lakoff's categorisation was later on followed by Holmes where she further divided Lakoff's observed data into two. According to Holmes (2001), primarily the linguistic devices which may be used for hedging or reducing the force of an utterance,' such as fillers, tag questions, and rising intonation on declaratives, and secondly, 'features which may boost or intensify a proposition's force' (2001:287), such as emphatic stress and intensifiers. While Lakoff saw this as powerlessness for Holmes, it was a means to find new ways to express herself.

Cameron and others (1989) recall it as an "entirely predictable, and given the pressure towards social conformity, rational, that women should demonstrate these qualities in their speech as well as in other aspects of their behaviour." (Cameron, McAlinden and O'Leary 1989:76). Even though Lakoff's work has severe draw backs, one cannot ignore the fact that her contribution to the field of language and gender has attracted many more researchers. The linguistic features in women's conversation was studied by Holmes (1986)on hedges, hyper-correct grammar (Trudgill 1983, Coates 1986; Cameron and Coates 1989), tag questions (Dubois and Crouch 1975; Holmes 1986; Cameron, McAlinden and O'Leary 1989), and commands (Goodwin 1980; Tannen 1990, 1994; Holmes 2001).

Fishman (1980) in her work *Interaction: The Work Women Do*, studied about the everyday conversation of both male and female. She analyses the power hierarchy between both the

genders which is a reflection of the social organisation. Fishman's study citied within the features Lakoff has mentioned in her seminal work. For her study on the conversational dominance, she recorded a fifty hour long conversation between couples at their home. Unlike Lakoff, Fishman saw questions as a powerful mode of utterance. Especially, women interfering in conversation with questions like "D'ya know what?", seeking attention with "This is interesting" (401), minimal responses "huh, yeah, umm"(402). According to Fishman's study woman use these devices of speech to assert their position in conversation. Considering what Fishman claims is true, one of the questions that arise is the social background in which the speaker has used these terms. Especially in a study where the gender language, dominance of speech is being studied, it is also important to specify the context in which the term has been used. Most of the examples Fishman has given is the salient feature in women's conversation as mentioned by researchers like Labov, Lakoff etc.

Later on, Barrie Throne and Nancy Henley's *Language and Sex: Difference and Dominance* (1975) through their work highlighted the social context in which male domination exists. Focussing on the dominance that prevails in the society, they stressed on the gender differentiation that existed both verbally and non-verbally, but dominated by the male in the society. Zimmerman and West used the Sacks, Schegloff, and Jeffersen's (1974) turn-taking model of conversational analysis to suggest that sex differences in taking turns in conversation may parallel sex differences "in the society's economic system, i.e., a matter of advantage" (1974: 124).

Wright and Hosman (1983) describe the greater use of hedges by women than by men. They observed that for women the more intensifiers and hedges they use in speech, the more elegant. Apparently, their observation was contrary to the analysis done by literature, Warfel's (1984) in a courtroom setting. His study witness a new schemas in the gender language especially in that particular context, the language used by the gender was deferential. Contrary to Lakoff's study (1973), where tag questions are seen as method for women to seek attention during conversations, Newcombe and Arnkoff (1979) claimed that tag questions in the sentences are to be considered less assertive. According to their analysis, non-qualified forms of speech, polite forms, are considered to be more welcoming. In the following years more researchers studied on the female language. Most of the researchers did research on the feminine features including Wright and Hosman, (1983),Liska, Mechling and Stathas (1981, Quina et al, 1984), less dominant Warfel (1984), less credible and attractive

Bradac, Hemphil and Tardy(1981;) Bradac and Mulac (1984), but more polite and friendly, Quina,Wingard, and Bates (1987).

2.2 The Difference Paradigm

Montgomery (1995) mentions about the speech variation between men and women which is directly proportional to the "power and status" and theemerging difference, or dual-culture, approach views sexdifferences as attributable to contrasting orientations toward relations (1995:168). To draw an example, men in our society are more focussed on the process of sharing and on the other side women are into socialising-interactions. In the view of Maltz and Broker (1982), even if, the interactional style in both the gender varies, yet the speech or conversational style of the women will be equal to men. Supporting their argument, one of the examples they have cited is, "American men and women come from different sociolinguistic subcultures, having learned to do different things with words in a conversation" (Cited in Freeman and McElhinny1996:239). One of the major researches they proposed was by Gumperz (1982). Gumprez's study looked into the cross-cultural and cross-sex behaviour of boys and girls. Through a sociolinguistic study on both the genders, on their speech style, Gumperz came to the conclusion that genderlect exist in a language and it is a part of the sub-cultures.

These researchers too cite a similar example as Fishman (1980),who in her work has mentioned where the woman responds to the situation with nods and minimal response. For men, these comments mean 'I agree with you', while for women they mean 'I'm listening to you- please continue.' Rather than a woman's style being deficient, as Lakoffwould believe, it is simply different. Inherent in this position is that cross-culturalmisunderstanding often occurs in mixed-sex conversation, as 'individuals wronglyinterpret cues according to their own rules," (ibid:240).

Critiquing the misunderstanding that exists in the concept of the "dual-culture approach", Tannen (1990) highlights on, "the language of women which is primarily 'rapport-talk', where establishing connections and promoting sameness is emphasized. Men, on the other hand, use language described as 'report-talk,' as a way of preserving independence while exhibiting knowledge and skill"(1990:77).

Ever since human beings are born, there exists a difference in the gender, i.e. male, female and transgender. All these gender speak differently or are taught to speak in a different way than the other gender. For example, we are taught the generalisation that men have to deal more with work that is outside the house while women with that inside house. Occupationally, also such terms are pre-set in our mind. To draw an example, when we hear the term 'surgeon', the first person that comes to our mind is a male surgeon. Similarly, the term teacher generally makesus associate the term with a female. Tannen in her work *You Just Don't Understand* (1990), mentions that it is not the social situation that differentiates between the male and female speech, in fact, it is the inherent system and the basic notion of the sex that discriminates the male and female on the basis of their speech. Observing the situation Tannen says,

"For males, conversation is the way you negotiate your status in the group and keep people from pushing you around; you use talk to preserve your independence. Females, on the other hand, use conversation to negotiate closeness and intimacy; talk is the essence of intimacy, so being best friends means sitting and talking. For boys, activities, doing things together, are central. Just sitting and talking is not an essential part of friendship. They're friends with the boys they do things with" (Tannen 1990).

Further, she (1994) points out at these generalisations with examples where "men would rather discuss sports, computers or military topics, while women emotions, with specific details and thorough descriptions." They are taught to dominate the other gender from childhood. While men are known for their arrogance and hierarchal domination, women are "taught to negotiate and make compromises" (Tannen, 1994).

Apart from this Tannen also mentions meta-messages. In her observation, people commonly misunderstand the conversations i.e., mixed-sex conversations, which is about the relationship between the attitudes and relations of the speakers. These linguistic signals in speech act as a core form especially in the difference approach. Tannen's work advocated on the difference approach where men and women were treated differently due to their biological sex, socialisation and upbringing (Tannen,1990).

However, Tannen's study was criticised by Aki Uchanda in her study titled *When Difference is Dominance (1992)*. Similar to Lakoff's method, Tannen's study too was focussed on

impersonal style. Uchanda critiques the stance taken by the 'difference paradigm' for two main reasons:

1. This approach is too simple to account for the things that happen in mixed-sex conversations.
2. The dichotomization of 'power' and 'culture' as two separate, independent concepts is improper (he believes that social interactions always occur in the context of a particular society).

(ibid, p. 547)

In short, Tannen's work is seen as an incomplete work in the field of language and gender which is certainly informative but limited to a "personal" space. Similar to the criticisms faced by Lakoff, Tannen's work is about certain section of American women.

Analysing the difference in the gender speech, Janet Holmes (1993) studied the oral stories in New Zealand. According to her, these stories are based on the narrations made by males and females. Through the stories she analysed how gender identities are being constructed. Her study concluded that the narration by men and their stories glorified the male as powerful and competent while women are seen as weak and vulnerable. The stories narrated over generations are just a reflection of the society and their gender construction that differentiates one from the other.

2.3 The Dominance Paradigm

The dominance paradigm emphasised on the male and female speech. The approach was based on the increasing disparity between the male and the female where the former dominates the latter.

The dominance paradigm was proposed mainly by researchers including Dale Spender (1981), Deborah Cameron (2003, 2006), and Pamela Fishman (1980, 1983). The paradigm looked into the social inequality and the patriarchy where the male dominance over women compelled them to lead their lives as subordinates. Cameron (2003) in the speech delivered at University of Leeds, titled "Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus", was based on the book titled by John Gray (1992).According to Cameron (2003), "any difference in men's and women's way of communication is not natural and inevitable but cultural and political"

(2003: 145). In a recently written article by Cameron (2010) one of the arguments that she gives is the mid-sex conversation. To quote her, " the disarm potential threats by displaying a submissive or non-provocative attitude while with other women it is rational to try to form protective alliances by displaying solidarity and mutual regard. Men are 'less polite' not because they cannot use these strategies, but because in most situations they feel no need to" (2010: 185).

As mentioned in this chapter, some of the earlier researchers viewed childhood socialisation as the foundation for the development of gender. Cameron also critiqued such theories proposed by difference theorists. Refuting the existing myths on the speech styles of men and women, Cameron (2006) shared the following premises:

1. Women are more verbally skilled than men.

2. Language and communication matter more to women than to men.

3. Men's goal in using language is to get things done while women's is making connections with other people.

4. Men's way of using language is competitive while women's is cooperative.

<div align="right">(Cameron, 2006)</div>

While difference paradigm argued on the sub-culture of the conversational strategies, the dominance theorists including Cameron and Fishman proposed on the change in the conversational strategies over the period of time.

Thus, the speakers who use a less assertiveness style in their speech are least given the preference, to be heard seriously and to be able to control the conversation flow.

To brief the difference and dominance paradigm, their main emphasis is to focus on the male and female speech from a sociolinguistic perspective. In addition to that, to enquire into the sociological factors that reasons behind the similarity and dissimilarity in their linguistic behaviour. Moreover, most of the scholarly works and reviewing them were conducted on a male-female discourse that helps the researcher to have a better understanding of the similarities and dissimilarities existing in the society. For future studies, these works would help to make a link between the sociological facets of interactions and the dominance model

by concentrating more on the inter-personal needs that the interlocutors have in fulfilling their social roles and endowed to them by the society and which they come from.

2.4 The Deficit Theory

The deficit theory emphasised that the subordinate gender i.e., women, lacked in many characteristic features that men benefitted from. The deficit approach was introduced by Robin Lakoff (1975). She argued on the existing gender inequalities and pointed out the existing asymmetries in language. For example: "If a little girl 'talks rough' like a boy, she will normally be ostracized, scolded, or made fun of. In this way society, in the form of a child's parents and friends, keeps her in line, in her place" (1975: 47). Secondly, "if a girl is damned she does, damned if she doesn't. If she refuses to talk like a lady, she is ridiculed and subjected to criticism as unfeminine; if she does learn, she is ridiculed as unable to think clearly, unable to take part in a serious discussion: in some sense, as less than fully human" (1975: 48). Due to social pressure, women's speech is limited to certain forms. Unlike men women use more indirect questions – commands. Their speech is more "polite". One of the reasons for such difference is the social upbringing. Lakoff's deficit approach states that women use more informal style and their speech form are more personal. Interestingly, these informal styles are more in the spoken form because during a verbal communication there is social pressure on women and they are taught to be "concerned" with the reaction of the listener. Lakoff in her work mentions about the difference in the lifestyles of women. While things are much easier for men, it is harder for women.

Satvi'c (1995) adds some of the characteristic traits in women that make them vulnerable or "powerless" when compared to men. According to him women are too modest, supportive, polite, empathetic, cooperative and respect" (Satvi'c 1995). In short, women are expected to behave differently in the society which in its exactness is a real replication of the truth that inequality is rather being created by the people around us. The deficit theory was later on countered with the difference theory. David Cameron (2003) defines this theory as a cultural theory which shows the distinction between different cultures and that men in society have always been provided with "vigour" and "variety" (Cameron, 2003), to authenticate their rights and to provide their interlocutors only with the necessary information, without irrelevant details.

2.5 Gender Difference in Research

2.5.1 Conversational Interruptions

In the studies conducted since the beginning of language and gender, men are considered as interrupters in the speech. Since men are believed to "run" the world, they benefit from dominating the other genders. Researchers including Zimmerman and West (1975) in their work supported the stereotyping of women. In their research work titled *Sex roles, interruptions and sciences in conversations* investigated on the casual conversation in both the sex's conversation. He noticed the presence of interruptions in the conversation, mostly caused by women. His research was conducted to support the dominance model. The interruptions in speech are seen as an intentional violation of the speech rules. One of the reasons why men prefer to break a smooth conversation is to assert their identity and domination as men. Zimmerman and West's study also focused on the overlaps in the conversation. Overlaps or accidental errors are an unintended breaker in the conversation which is neutral to both the genders. Unlike the intended interruption of power in the conversation, overlaps are seen as less negative. Zimmerman and West has been criticised for their subjective analysis. For example:

Female: So uh you really can't bitch when you've got all those on the same day (4.2) but I uh asked my physics professor if I couldn't chan[ge that]
Male: [Don't] touch that (1.2)
Female: What? (#)
Male: I've got everything jus' how I want in that notebook (#)You'll screw it up leafin' through it like that.

<div align="center">(West & Zimmerman, 1983:105)</div>

In the above conversation between male and female, Zimmerman and West argue on the overlapping of the conversation. The man interrupts the conversation in order to assert his dominance. In such circumstance, the analysis of the conversation can vary from person to person. For example, the conversation can also be seen as, since the man wanted his note book in a certain way and he doesn't like the woman holding the book and her suggestion, he overlaps her speech. Secondly, the woman has every right to suggest changes in that book but the male domination suppresses her suggestion. Moreover, the overlaps and interruptions are context dependent.

<div align="center">36</div>

Zimmerman and West's method of studying interruptions faced huge backlash from other researchers. Stephen Murray (1985) argues, "for example, that can be no absolute syntactical or acoustical criteria for recognising an occurrence of "interruptions "because a speaker's "completion depend on a number of factors including strength or frequency of speech, number of points made, and special authority to speak on particular topic" (Murray 1995,[Tannen,1996: 59]). Murray provides with example of the conversation-interruption between husband and wife:

H: I think [that
W: [Do you want some more salad?]

The interruptions in speech will vary and at times the speaker may or may not feel interrupted but one thing that exists during such conversation is the variation by the degree. Harvey Sacks observed the example by Murray as a non-interruption in speech as the topic of discussion was having food for dinner and the priority was offering it. Hence, one cannot mark such conversational breaks cannot be considered as "interruptions" as the social context reveals something else.

To brief the observation of these researchers, the interruptions in speech is more towards a one-sided study. Without taking an account of the situation in which the conversation occurred, the relation between the speaker-listener, the participant's intentions should not be interpreted as interruptions.

Tannen (1994) relates interruptions as a supportive factor in the speech system than an obstruction. According to Coates (1989), overlapping are the signals that supports the speaker-listener relation as one will be actively involved in the listenership. Beattie (1981) in her study on male and female students in university tutorials revealed that male students interrupt less than female students. Even after examining the context in which interruptions are made, the result was greater towards the female. Even though, Zimmerman and West found out that men interrupt more than women, it doesn't symbolise that women are weaker or subordinate to the other gender.

2.5.2 Tag questions

One of the main linguistic feature Lakoff suggested as the character of women's language is tag questions. It is said that women use tag questions with two purposes: either to assert their presence in the conversation or else a voluntary support for the men to maintain their dominance.

In order to study the use of tag questions in male and female, Siegler & Siegler (1976) did a data based study in college students. They were asked to produce the different forms of sentences as much as they can. The study resulted that women students used more tags than men. Their study could also be stereotyping women as weak however; the data resulted in something else.

One of the strong claims Lakoff stresses on tag question is the lack of confidence in the other gender. For example;

   a) Is John here?
   b)) John is here, isn't he?

Lakoff explains to the response of these questions

For the first question the speaker will be expecting a negative answer from the respondent. While in the example b) the speaking is waiting for a confirmation form an uncertainty. To quote Lakoff, "I still want a response from him, as I do with a yes-no question; but I have enough knowledge (or think I have) to predict that response, much as with a declarative statement. A tag question, then, might be thought of as a declarative statement without the assumption that the statement is to be believed by the addressee: one has an out, as with a question. A tag gives the addressee leeway, not forcing him to go along with the views of the speaker." (Lakoff, 1973: 54).

One of the major drawbacks of these researches is the tendency to show women as inferior to other. Holmes (1984) argues that "tags can express either modal or affective meanings depending upon the situation." The modal tag functions as something that is needed to confirm the uncertainty of the speaker by the listener.

Ex: You were not in the class yesterday, weren't you?

The above "affective tag" sentence is assigned with two roles; first the speaker has used a less assertive or to say softened form of tag question and at the same time it is an indirect way to threaten the child/student in a much "softer tone".

In the example, "Pass the salt, could you?", is an example for "facilitative tag" question. To say Lakoff's study only looked at the facilitative tags in conversations. Supporting the arguments of Lakoff, Holmes (1984) argued that both the genders use these forms of tags but it is the women who used facilitative tags more than men. Her study advantages women as the marker of smooth or creative conversations.

Contradicting the studies of Lakoff and Holmes, Cameron (1989) said irrespective of the sex, affective tags are never used by the powerless participant. In fact, the tag questions are used by the powerful participant in terms of class, age and occupation. The studies conducted by various researchers resulted in multiple conclusions. As mentioned above, some researchers have claimed tag questions are the results of powerlessness and others argued opposite to the former's argument. One major outcome of these studies are, these are context dependent, the social backgrounds of the participants matters in the results and thirdly, it can be seen that what most of the researchers have written about is mere stereotyping of women as under confident, weak and vulnerable.

In Japanese sociolinguistics research, similar sex differences seem to create confusion. Many studies have revealed that in Japanese the cultural stereotyping has created a disparity between the actual speech and the expected speech of women. Women are stereotyped in such a way that they are expected to use the language in a more polite form in public. Hori (1986) through her study *A sociolinguistic analysis of the Japanese honorifics*, investigated the relation between gender and the use of honorificational expressions. Her study explains how women cannot use forms of speech that lack in politeness because in Japanese women especially housewives are ranked as an inferior section and they are given status below children. One of the questions Hori ask to during her study is "Write a variant of 'iku' you usually use when asking 'When do you go?'

(itsu-iku-ka?) to the different people you meet". (Hori 1986)

Hori found that people prefer to behave according to the way they are stereotyped in the society. The study was conducted among 256 men aged between 42 -70 years, and 271 women aged between 40- 62 years. Most of the men informants from whom the data was collected were white collar employees and the women informants were housewives. The difference in their profession/ occupation itself resulted in the variation in the speech of both the sexes. One of the drawback of Hori's study is she failed to look study the use of honorific forms by working women. Moreover, the study was conducted in men and women who were

middle aged. Especially the middle aged women have accumulated the polite forms due to the social pressure in their speech. Collecting data from the younger women would have given a closer look into the reality perhaps the use of politeness honorifics would be lesser.

2.6 Matrilineal Muslim Community

The matrilineal Muslim in Kerala is not much researched field in terms of language. The existing texts on these Muslims largely focus on the historical approach on topic like maritime relations, formation of the society, conversation and so on. One of theearliest historical accounts on this community was in 16th century by Sheik Zin-Uddin Makudumin. His work *Thuhafat- al- Mujahideen*gave an account of the war the Muslims in Malabar raged against the Portuguese invaders. In 1951, William Logan wrote the famous manual for the Malabar Muslims giving a detailed account of their social and cultural aspects.

The *Malabar Manual*influenced lot of scholars to study in detail about the Muslims of North Kerala. In 1971, P.V. Balakrishnan published the first book *Matrilinlineal Systems in Malabar* which centred on the matrilineal Muslim's historical evolution. However, many books were written before P.V. Balakrishnan's work. M.S.A. Rao's *Social Change in Malabar*(1963) describes the changes in the communities living in the North Kerala. Providing in detail about the social transformation the communities in Kerala had gone through in terms of family and marriage, the book reveals about the treatment of people in Malabar. Schneider and Gough (1962) published *Mappila of Kerala,* the landmark work on the matrilineal kinships through sociological investigation. Fr. J.Puthenkalam's*Marriage and Family in India (*1977)throws a light into the various matrilineal communities in the state.

Even though many scholars have written on the Malabar Muslims in the 90's, these studies failed to specifically look into the formation and the existence of the newly emerged matrilineal society.Other than the scholarly works on the composition of the matrilineal society, the common people mostlyobtained knowledge about this Muslim community through fictional works. Writers including N.P. Mohammed, P.A. Mohammed Koya, T. Vasudevan Nair, V.P. Mohammed wrote novels and short stories focussing on the socio-economic and cultural life of this community. U.A.Khandr's book *Oru Mappilappeninte Lokam (The world of a Mappila Woman)* is one of the landmarks that focussed on the Muslim women.

2.7 Transformation of Joint Families

The matrilineal Muslim community in Kerala is the lone society where still the joint family system exists. Over the past decade a great decline in the community's composition can be seen. With a rise in the industrialisation and migration, to Gulf countries, the big joint family system started shifting to the nuclear family. The new nuclear family system fragmented the kinship relations that existed in the joint family system. Mandelbaum(1963) through a study writes on the social breakdown of the joint family system. According to him, the communities have started giving the least preference to the family-kinship relations, hence leading to the major breakdown in the joint family system. Mine's study (1972) on the Tamil Nadu settled Muslim merchants, the Pallavapuram Muslims, mentions about the impossibility to manage a large joint family specifically in the case of a merchant society as it hinders rational co-existence.

The joint family system in context of India is not limited to a particular community. Even the Hindus, Nairs- in the context of Kerala, followed the joint family system. Enormous volumes on the Hindu joint family system and their kinships were written, however, few were on the Muslims. Sociologists A.R.Saiyed and V.V.Saiyed (1982) commented on the multiple drawbacks for this lack of studies on Muslims as, "sociological analyses of the natural relationship between modern urban-industrial influences and Muslim family in modern India are virtually absent. Second, and more important, it has helped to create and perpetuate certain pre-conceptions and stereotypes of Indian Muslims" (Saiyed and Saiyed, 1982: 113). Often we see Muslims as a community which restricts change in the community and prefers to live according to their religious conservatism. This is a partially true but it doesn't cover up the truth that the Muslims too have undergone or welcomed revisions in their community. As mentioned earlier, most of the studies have concentrated on the composition of the patrilineal system not the matrilineal systems. The laws, inheritance of property etc., varies within the Muslim society as we characterise them.

In the matrilineal communities in Kerala, it's the groom who is brought to the bride's home. But mostly, these women are married at a younger age. Educational backwardness in one of the major problems the community is facing today. Mohammed Koya (1983) and Panikkar (1988) mention this as a result of the lack of economic freedom. Women in the community lack in education which reflects upon their living standards and social organisation.

The status of women has come to be neglected as patriarchy has become more dominant. Even though this is the only matrilineal community that follows a matrilocal system that follows a matrilocal system, the existing patrilineal community has changed the perspective and position of women in a larger way. Siddiqui (1987) in his paper *Muslim Women in Transition: A Social Profile*, points out how Muslim women in Kerala are lagged behind when it comes to education. Their world remains limited within their household premises. Employments and political participation for these women are hardly present. In short, the life of the women in this community is more is more limited to women's role as child bearers and how good is more limited to women's role as childbearers and how good and how good they are managing their offsprings and elders.

Famous critic from Kerala Hafiz Mohammed wrote in *Chandrika Daily* (2011) wrote about the confinement of the Muslim women in their home. According to him these women's day begins and ends in the same place of the house, kitchen. They are trained to find happiness in the four walls of kitchen sweating and cooking for the large family. "Even if a woman is educated, she is hardly allowed working outside," adds Mohammed.

Contradictory to Mohammed's article, Aliya Rusdhidi wrote in Indian Muslim Women (April 2004), the Muslim women in Kerala have undergone a tremendous change with socio-economic and cultural changes. However her article doesn't provide detailed information on unemployment amongst the Muslim women including the educated ones who have received formal education.

Now, even though Muslim women receive a formal education it doesn't mean that they are "allowed" to work. In the 2001 census report, 85.4 percent of Muslim women in Kerala are literate. One of the reasons for unemployment of women in this matrilineal and patrilineal community can be seen in relation to the migration to the Gulf countries. As Gulf countries provide more secure and well-paid jobs, the women are often forced to migrate along with their husband. At times, they are left alone in the homeland with the tag of a Gulf man's wife. The social status of the women can be seen with a third dimension in relation to this migration. Hence, it is important to study the social change-assertion of the women in the changing matrilineal society.

CHAPTER 3

CONVERSATIONAL STYLE

The variation in language doesn't stay specific to one particular community. In fact, the variation stretches up to gender, class, social situation and so on. The variation in the linguistic patterns of both the male and female gender can be analysed during their conversations in private and public spheres. To define the public sphere, it's "a discursive space in which individuals and groups congregate to discuss matters of mutual interest and, where possible, to reach a common judgment" (Public Sphere and Civil Society, 14.4 H). And the private sphere is limited within the home and family.

Historically, the power of the matrilineal Muslim women was limited within their house premises, i.e. the private sphere. The women in the community were more assertive when it comes to family matters, functions related to their family including marriages, child naming ceremony and so on. As the domain vary, the speakers' role and power equation changes. In short, in these private spaces women were provided with an opportunity of being more "self".

However, in the present scenario, it is much difficult to find women being assertive as the patriarchy have entered into the community wiping off the voice of the women as used to be. Focusing on one of the pertinent question Lakoff (1975) has raised during her research on the variation in the speech of both the genders in private and public spheres, this chapter will focus on the language used by the women in various socio-economic and cultural contexts.

3.1 Difference in Men and Women's Language Pattern

One of the major concerns the researchers including Lakoff has raised during their study on language and gender include conversational practice. Often most of the features or the way of conversing was stereotyped as, men's language and women's language. According to Lakoff, one of the fundamental reasons that attributed to the existing gender inequality is the conversational practice where terms and manner of speaking are often stereotyped and identified in relation to the gender. However, if we look into the present society, it is impossible to refuse the fact that the features of the language are often linked with gender.

Spender (1980) draws examples of women and men's speech in a formal setting. According to him, people have low perception of the use of men and women's speech in a formal setting (Spender, 1980). The claims by the researchers on the women's language can be further defined through the dominance theory as mentioned by West and Zimmerman (1975), Holmes (1988) and Fishman (1977). To define dominance theory briefly, it envisions the

linguistic variation in the speech used by men and women in accordance with the power equation as contributed by the society where men dominate and women are subordinate.

Along with historical background, the language spoken by the people in the society comes along with a socio-cultural baggage containing a set of rules or norms to follow. Looking into the conversational practices in the matrilineal society, women within the household usually use a causal and freestyle of talking. Interestingly, the women in the community switch to a much polite, less interruptive and soft-spoken style of speaking as they participate in a public sphere. Zimmerman (1975) explains women as less interruptive speakers in the public sphere are the result of male domination in society. Moreover, the power domination benefits the men to use interruptive style during a men-women conversation. In the context of the present study, the difference in the linguistic style of conversation is adherent to the social practices of the community. The words, meaning that each society uses are the result of their language use. It is seldom difficult to separate either of these forms of expression.

The conversational practices with in the society allow people to communicate their ideas alongside with maintaining the relationship with each other. As the speaker-listener communication develops, it also opens up a world between them to converse on. The conversations become more relevant between the speaker and a listener when they are related to the subject or matter, time, the purpose of the conversation etc. As Sacks, Shegloff and Jefferson (1974) mention the important aspect of conversation seems "'basic', in that it would be invariant to parties, such that whatever variations the parties brought to bear in the conversation would be accommodated without change in the system, and such that it could be selectively and locally affected by social aspects of context" (1974: 700).

Alongside with the importance of turn-taking and the speaker-listener relationship during a conversation, yet another prominent feature in the communication style is the relevance of the gender. Irrespective of the set of conditions in conversations, there always exist differences in the style in male and female conversation. As mentioned in this chapter earlier, one of the major arguments Lakoff (1975) argues in the conversational practice- turn-taking is the "power" relation with each other.

The conversational pattern changes while talking to a stranger and a familiar person. For people, especially women, the conversation among women- stranger are more difficult than male. Especially in the case of a conversation in a public sphere, it's difficult to initiate the

conversation as the speaker lack in the familiarity, subject of discussion and coordination with the other person.

The women in the matrilineal Muslim society of Malabar lack in such confidence during their conversation with the male in a public sphere.

Ex 1: Given below is the conversation between 62 year old Zuhra (female) and 58 year old Sirajuddin (male) as they came across in the market

Sirajuddin (S): entallam iṭṭa?

How are you sister?

Zuhra (Z):   Ah!, nallati tanni

     Yes, everything is fine

S   :   čanṯajil vaṉṉina?

     You came to the market?

Z   :   Ah.

     Yes

S   :   kayaa vaŋgina?

     Did you buy vegetable?

Z   :   Hmm.(nodding her head)

     Yes

Z   :   enna seri (smiling)

     Okay see you

S   :   seri

     See you

This is a brief conversation between two adults in a public sphere. The first sentence of the conversation itself informs the reader or the third person witnessing the conversation that the two individuals are familiar with each other. But as the conversation continues between them, the woman responds to him with minimal response. During the conversation the female (Zuhra) hardly talks and she uses gestures like nodding, smiling etc to the male's question. Similarly, the conversation soon was discontinued by the female.

It is worth notable that how the conversation between two familiar adults is discontinued in the public sphere. Lakoff (1975) explains the reason as "power" and "inequality" between two sexes. Even though, the community in Malabar still follows a matrilineal system, women

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have a lesser voice in the public sphere. But the power structure also changes with respect to the social status even between the genders.

Ex: 2: The conversation between 62 years Zuhra (Z), female and a 45 year old male vegetable shopkeeper (Veg Shopkeeper) explains the alteration in the power as a result of social status.

Zuhra (Z)   : ṯakkaḷi etraini?
     Tomatoes, how much?
     How much for tomatoes?

Veg Shopkeeper : irupaṯu ruba
     Twenty rupees

Zuhra   : Allah! bella kajarinni?
     Oh god! price increased- PST PROG
     Oh god! has the price gone up?

Veg Shopkeeper : Hmm. Eppo Tamizh Naṭṭiline majaella atha…
     Yes. now Tamil Nadu –LOC rain-Neg that's why
     Yes. There is no rain in Tamil Nadu, that;s why…

Zuhra   : immatiri poyina   nammakku koji bangichu tinnam
     if like this go-PRES PROG I-PL chicken buy eat-FUT
     If things go like this, let us have chicken

Veg Shopkeeper : atha umma
     Yes, mother

Ex.3: Conversation between 62 year old Zuhra and 48 year old butcher

Zuhra : a:dinneŋaja   billa?
  Goat-how much price
  How much does the mutton costs?

Butcher: eiunooru roopa
   Seven hundred rupees

Zuhra : anakkə   orarakilo tanninna
  I-FIRST PR.SG. some- half kilo give-PRES PROG
  Give me some half kilo

(Butcher gives her the meat)

Zuhra : Serinna (nodding)
  Okay then

The above conversations are between a female and a female in the public sphere. In the example(2), the speaker's conversation with the listener- vegetable shopkeeper is more productive and has a power assertiveness added by the woman. At the same time in example (3) the conversation between a woman and the butcher ends soon. In both examples, the woman goes to two different shops while one remains a more productive conversation, the other remains to end soon. The conversation occurs with strangers in a public sphere. The reason for one conversation to be more of a mutual turn-taking conversation than the other is the power structure. Women in the Muslim community are usually (allowed to) purchase vegetables from the shops while the same community doesn't witness many women visiting a butcher's shop. The latter job is assigned to the men in society. As seen in the example (2), the woman has an upper hand in the power equation compared to the male shopkeeper primarily because the woman is allowed to visit the vegetable shop by society and secondly in terms of money, the woman has an upper hand than the seller. In the example (3), even though the woman is the buyer since the society disapproves the woman visiting the butcher, the power equation goes higher with the male butcher.

In the public sphere in the matrilineal Muslim community, the women are expected to be more polite and soft-spoken and be less socializing than men. Galbraith (1983) refers to the power structure the society follows among two participants. According to him "in the power distribution process, the powerful person is always provided with the opportunity of imposing his/her ideas to the other person" (1983:20). Holmes (1988) stresses the same situation of dominant vs subordinate or the powerful vs the powerless i.e. men vs women.

The above examples show the variation in the same woman's conversation with three male members in different situations. Over each conversation the woman uses gestures like nodding, smiling etc as her response, which embarks to the one of the linguistic feature the woman is assigned to, politeness.

Ben Allan(1984) says, it is usually seen in men that they end the conversation as soon as they reach the decision or reached the purpose of the particular conversation. But women continue to enjoy their conversation with the other person regardless of what they wanted to convey. In Allan's view women through their conversation prefer to maintain an intimate relationship with the listener which is not the case of men (1984: 150). In the present context of a man-woman conversation, what we see is opposite. Regardless of the familiarity with the person

(Example 1), the woman discontinues the conversation as a result of the power the man holds in public.

Table 3.1: The table below describes about the conversation between male and female in various public spheres:

Category- Public sphere	Number of Females	Number of conversation Male and Female	Number of conversation initiated by female	Number of conversation initiated by male	Percentage of conversation by women
Market	10	6	2	4	33.33%
Vegetable shopkeeper	8	8	5	3	62.5%
Butcher	3	3	1	2	33.33%
Tailor	8	8	7	1	87.5%
Restaurant	8	5	0	5	0%
Textile	5	5	0	5	0%
Public transport(Bus)	10	10	2	8	20%

In the conversation between the male and female groups in public spheres, most of the conversations are initiated by the male. Women's talks are majorly initiated only in places like vegetable shops and in tailoring shops. Their conversations started by the female are mostly due to their necessity and works that come under them. For example the women in the matrilineal community have a strong voice in the house, buying vegetables are also done by

women as they have to bargain for the price, the conversation turns to be more productive and woman initiated. Similarly, with the tailoring shops, the woman has to put her imaginations-ideas on how her dress is going to be stitched and in such cases the power equation in the public sphere shift to the female.

In the rest of the conversational style, men take the initiation in the conversation as the situation demands women to be more polite and quiet in that particular sphere. The frequency of female talking in the public sphere drastically falls as the superior take over power.

Lakoff explains such taking over women's role by men would subsequently "submerge everyone's feelings and some gruffness of reaction, of course, which the rules producing camaraderie are expressly set up to help gloss over"(1975: 83).

In the matrilineal Muslim society, even though they follow the matrilineal system, in reality, it doesn't exist much. The rest of the community, the Muslims in Malabar region co-exist follows the patriarchal system. Here, the notion of male domination matters a lot. Society finds it "insulting" if the men are dominated by women. As children, one of the famous lines we are taught in school is, "father is the head or breadwinner of the house and mother "cooks" in the kitchen." Even if a woman is the breadwinner of the home, still the father remains the head of the family. The idea the society imposes upon us gives more power to male domination in terms of linguistic capacity. It would be rather difficult for the matrilineal society to stand alone with the concept of being "different" in terms of gender power compared to the rest, at least in the public sphere.

Besides, during the study, it was noticed that women have the tendency to use the much softer and polished form of speaking. Categorising women's language to soft, polished, sober, polite is not uncommon in general. But in the matrilineal community, these features are not commonly seen in women especially in private spheres. Here in the public sphere, women shift their manner of speaking. Linguist William Labov (1966), in his findings mentions the women's tendency to shift towards a more "standard" form and men prefer to use a non-standard form in different situations.

In the study, it was noticed that women try to talk more perfectly than men. According to the women informants, they face a different kind of expectations than men. Men are not judged

or accounted for what they say in public while women are. The society pressurizes women with a normative expectation when it comes to their language use. For women, it is important to maintain her tone, pitch, intonation, use of words etc as these gendered features attribute to the female character. Though the society follows the matrilineal system, the outside society categories certain linguistic features with the gender marking in order to maintain the existing discourse of feminine and masculine.

3.2 Female and initiation of conversation in public sphere vs private sphere

It is important to have an initiative sentence to begin a conversation between two individuals. Usually, it starts with greetings or questions. The speaker and the listener will have to follow a set of rules to have a good conversation. Turn-Taking is one of the important factors of it. Moreover, both people will have to maintain a good relationship with each other to have an interesting conversation.

As mentioned in the earlier examples in this chapter, women hardly start the conversation. Mostly women initiate the conversation in the public sphere with greetings while men mostly start with a question. The women in the matrilineal community mostly ask open-ended questions and the men preferably use close-ended questions.

Some of the commonly used open ended questions by women:

Ex. 4.i) enthellam undu?

    How   things

    How are things?

    ii) iŋaɭu   ebide   poinna?

    You-SEC.PR where go-PST

    Where did you go?

    iii) iŋaɭu   enthellam vaŋinna?

    You-SEC.PR   what all   buy-PST

    What all did you buy?

    iv) anakkə   entha aŋaɖu pojja?

    You-SEC.PR   why   there go-PST

    Why can't you go there?

v)   ɔɭkkə   enthei urakkam baratte?

    She-SEC.PR.FEM   why   sleep   can-NEG-PST

    Why can't she sleep?

vi) iŋaɭu   eŋaneja athu   noikkije?

    You-SEC.PR.SING   how   that   check-PST

    How did you check that?

Closed questions used by men:

Ex.5. i) umma,   iŋalukkə   vajja?

        Mother,   you-SEC.PR.SING.   well-NEG

        Are you not well, mother?

    ii) ɔ:n   kaɖajil   varundundo?

        He-SEC.PR.SING   shop-LOC   come-PRES.PROG

    Is he coming to the shop?

    iii) iŋaɭu   eppɔ   pokkum?

        You- SEC.PR.SING   when   leave-FUT

    When will you leave?

    iv) enikkə   ɔru   ubakkairam chaiytarumo?

        I-FIRST.PR.SING. one   favour   do-FUT

        Will you do me a favour?

    v) iŋaɭu   ennatə patram   kandinna?

        You-SEC.PR.SING   today   newspaper   see-PST

    Did you see the today's newspaper?

    vi) biriyani   kaalayi?

        Biryani   ready-FUT

    Is the birayani ready?

Table:3.2

Gender	No.of participants	Fequency open-ended questions		Fequency closed questions	
Female	12	8	66.66%	8	66.66%
Male	12	5	41.66%	10	83.33%

Not every older and middle-aged matrilineal women in Malabar region is aware of the social situations going around them. The research was done on women who are housewives and mostly had school education. For the women in the community, their conversations last longer than men as they prefer to ask open-ended questions, that provide them with more amount of information. Their talks usually begin with uncertain questions or information that they whish to have knowledge about. These topics include; inquiry about a person, about themselves and about some situation.

3.3 Conversations of Women in private spheres

The conversational patterns in both men and women change as soon as they enter into the private sphere. Unlike the conventions, they have to follow in a public sphere, where they are allowed to express themselves.

In the matrilineal Muslim community, the women often hold the power within the family. The conclusion the public draws upon them is hardly their concern. The women are more open to subjects, initiation of talks and other forms of expressions in the private sphere. This section of the chapter will look into the topics and terms women prefer to use in their house premises.

a) Intimate topics/ subjects

Intimacy can be defined with multiple meanings depending on the situation. The term cannot be limited to a person or to a form of thought. In general, we relate the term to the one's personal feeling towards the other person which can be related to sexual thoughts or so. But the depth of the terms remains much deeper than that. Feldman (1979) characterises intimacy as a deeper form of affection that two people share in their relationship with a sense of knowledge of other person's feeling.

The women during the conversation with among other women especially express their intimate relationship with the other person. They use intimate terms to refer their dear ones during conversation.

Ex.6. Conversation between two women in house

i)   inʈə   mɔːnikkə   ɔːɭe   istannenn

     my   son-ACC   her   like

       My son like her.

ii)   mɔɭei   ebide banne

     daughter-ACC   here   come

     Dear(daughter), come here.

iii)   iː   nʈe   muttannu

     you   mine-POSS   pearl

     You are my pearl (a precious stone).

These are some common words of intimate expression that a woman expresses towards referring and addressing her children. However, terms used in ex. (iii) are hardly used in a public sphere. In the public sphere women often restricts themselves from using the intimate terms rather they prefer using the names. These terms used by women to refer to their own offspring comes from an intimacy that carries a different warmth and affection.

Ex.7. Conversation between women – women in private sphere

i)   Woman 1 : inʈe   mɔɭkkə   ellatinə   phastannei

         my-POSS   daughter   everything   first

         My daugter is first in everything

     Woman 2 : inʈe   kuʈʈium epaɽum   padijkkum

         my-POSS   child   all the time   study-PRES PROG

         My daughter studies all the time

As the conversational setting changes, the use of linguistic terms also changes along with it. The women in the matrilineal Muslim society prefer to talk about their children with multiple intimate address terms. As a reflection of their love towards their nurtured offspring, these

women share in detail about them. The women's speech mostly revolves around their family and household matters. The women in their private group conversations are not ashamed of talking or expressing their intimate relationship with the people whom she loves. Whereas, men are mostly dismissive of expressing such forms even in private spheres. During the private conversations men prefer to switch from one topic to the other. Hirschman (1973) refers to how men prefer to break the conversation of their fellows' in order to prove to others that they are better informants of a subject. However, in the matrilineal Muslim community, men especially in private conversations doesn't interfere or interrupt the other person especially women while they are talking. Moreover, intimate terms are used by men in a much private sphere like bedrooms.

3.4 Topic of discussion in Women

Conversations are very important for people in order to understand the people and society around them. The topics of discussion can begin from one part to the world and ends in the other. Even though the conversations starts with a particular intention of getting the knowledge of something the other person desire for, the talk and the topic can go on for hours. Depending upon the gender, profession, culture and so on, the topic of conversation also varies. For example, the conversation between two academics will mostly begin with academic discussions. Conversation between two professional beauty stylists would begin with their products and new tends. Even if the conversation begins with one's area of interest, they can lose track of it as the process begins. Some of the topic women in the matrilineal Muslim communities discuss among their friends or relatives:

a) **Family**

The women in the matrilineal Muslim women hold more power than men in the household matters. For the women in the community, family matters are foremost important than the ongoing issues in the society. As a result, most of their concerns during conversations will be related to their blood relations and other household matters.

No matter how progressive is our society, when it comes to household responsibilities, its always the women. In matrilineal community also this is no exception. Completely burdened with the responsibility of her family, their topics of conversations are a mere reflection of it. The topics include shopping, cleaning, children, husband, in-laws, cooking and so on. In the

matrilineal society it's the responsibility of the men to purchase things and women work like their reminder clocks. For example, the conversation between a wife and husband:

Ex:9. Wife - Husband

(i) Wife: iŋaɭu inni ma:rketti pɔjiunda?

　　　Are you going to the market.

Husband: inʈengilum vaŋanido?

　　　Need to buy anything?

Wife: Hmm. ɔrarakilo paca:rə, kappikkei tejala poɖium ella, kaja baŋaŋm. pine ɔɭkkei entellamo baŋanundennei. Inikkə cevattailla.

Yes. Need half kilo of sugar, there is no powder for the coffee, need to buy vegetables. Also she needs to buy something. I dont remember.

Husband: seri. ŋa:n baikiʈʈu ai:nju manikkə pɔgam.

　　　Okay. I will go at 5pm in the evening.

  ii)　　Elderly woman and daughter

　　　Woman: ingaɭu marinnu kazhichinni?

　　　　　Did you eat the medicine?

　　　Mother : ella

　　　　　　No

　　　Woman: iŋaɭukkei nthə kajichaellə?

　　　　Why can't you eat?

  iii)　　Mother to child

　　　Mother: mɔɭe, homewarkku chəithinni?

　　　 My child, did you do your homework?

　　　Child: illa imma

　　　　No mother

　　　Mother: ṉikkin ŋa:n iɖa: vaṉṉina

　　　　　Wait, I am coming

　　　Child: umma, viʃakkunnu

　　　　　Mother, I am hungry

　　　Mother: čɔ:rə iɖaʈʈe?

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Should I give you rice?

Child: hmm

Yes

Mother: karry eṉtellam veṇḍinna?

What all vegetable do you need?

The above examples of conversation between the woman and other members of the family shows some of the most common conversational topics within the household. The women are forced to talk about certain topic with her fellow residents because of the responsibility she has been slapped upon. Along with the conversational topics, a variation in the style talking also changes with respect to the society. In the hosuehold conversations there are lesser interruptions when women talk.

b) Women and social issues

The matrilineal Muslim women during their private conversations discuss a lot of topics. They mostly prefer to talk about women and education in their society. Unlike the men in society, women show more concern during their discussions. Most of the women during the study prefer to talk about the present dressing trends, harassment of women, on health issues especially on the rise of cancer patients, on how the society is changing in the hands of men, education-fees, migration to gulf and unemployment, Mecca- religion, etc. Women in their conversations are good speakers as well as good listeners. They have the ability to listen to other people and willingly accept their ideas or suggestions if the other person is right.

Ex: In a conversation between a group of Muslims women from the community, were discussed on the women's visit to the holy land of Mecca at old age. Their conversations included topics related to the harassment happening across the country.

Woman 1: alla iŋaɭu e kɔllam hadʒinu pɔinilla?

Are you not going for Haj this year?

Woman 2: hmm...ella (nodding)

Woman 1 : intennu abesa kɔjitilla?

Why? Didn't you apply?

Woman 2: mmhmm...(nodding no)

Woman 3: abide e kɔllam nalla tikka annienni

This year the rush is more

Woman 2: iŋaḷu patraitille bartha kandinna?

Did you see the news in the newspapper?

Woman 3: illa

Woman 1: enthanni

     What is it?

Woman 2: Ka:sargoḍe ɔru peŋŋinne ubadravichu

A woman was harrassed in Kasargod

Woman 1: eh! enthannu?

     (Shockingly)What is it?

Woman 2: ah! ratiriye purathupɔyathannu

     She went out at night

Woman 3: ho! entellamanno ippo kekkaṇe. Pediayinna keṭṭiṭu

     Oh!, what all are we listening to these days. Getting scared after hearing this

Woman 2: athe, rabile pɔlum praʃanaŋaḷa appa ida rathiri

     Yes, even in the morning its not safe, then think about night

The women in the matrilineal Muslim society discusses issues with women outside the society. Since these old women, who were the prime informants of the study, haven't travelled much outside their locality, they are curious to know and discuss issues happening around them or the country.

Ex:10.Conversation between Zuhra (Matrilineal Muslim woman)and the interviewer (outsider)

Zuhra: alla moḷe, i: ḍellil ninnu enthina ebadette kurichu paḍikyanne?

 Listen girl, why are you studying about us while live in Delhi?

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Interviewer: athu, evidette strikkaḻ eppozhum marumakkatayam annu follow čaijunne, umma

Mother, thats because, you follow matrilineal system.

Zuhra: ḍellil okke peṇkuṭṭikaḷkku paḍikyanne surasitam unḍo moḻe?

Is it safe for women to study in Delhi?

Interviewer: undu ummaa

Yes mother.

Zuhra: anakku peḍiɔnnuilla?

Are you not scared?

Interviewer: ella ummaa

No mother.

Zuhra: hmm...iːje dairashaliannu athɔḍalle iː ebiḍe bare banne

Yes...you are a stalwart. Thats why you came till here.

Zuhra: pakshe, sooksikyanm abide paṇde ɔru peṇṇinne kure peru kooḍi pidipicchu. Anakku ariyumo?

But, you should be careful. A woman was raped there once. Do you know that?

Interviewer: uva umma

Yes mother

Zuhra: nalla nalla besham iṭṭu nadannal, pine ratri purathu erangate irunnalum mati keto.

You should wear nice clothes and don't go outside at night. Okay?

The conversations of women related to social issues will be mostly related to female subjects. Nevertheless, the female in the matrilineal Muslim society are loaded with their own household family issues, mostly they prefer to talk about family matters than social matters.

Even though, the community women like elderly people are not much educated, bout through digital media, to some extend through print media, these women are well aware of the issues

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going on in the society. They prefer to listen to news, stories etc related to women issues than men.

For a comparative analysis, the men belonging to matrilineal Muslim community discuss issues related to health, economy, other global issues etc. The women in the community spend their lives looking after their family. The men in the community maintain both personal as well as professional life. So varying upon the situation in private sphere, their topics of discussion on social issues also differ.

c) Tittle- tattle and women

Tittle-tattle, gossip, bitching are some of the terms related to women. Though gossipl cannot be assigned to a particular gender, it is usually related to females. Cameron(2011) defines it as, " …discussion of several persons not present but known to the participants, with a strong focus on critically examining these individuals" appearance, dress, social behavior and sexual mores." This part of the conversation is something that is unavoidable. This is one of those forms of the conversation that is enjoyed by every gender.

The society acknowledges gossiping as something that is "innate" in women who are unaware of the larger social causes. But this is one of the common mistakes we assume and are related to women. Gossips are use by every gender. In fact, anything that is more personal, entertaining with an enjoyable conversation along with a small personnel group of friends or intimates can be categorized into gossip.

Jones(1990) classifies gossip into four main categories: a. house-talk (information exchange on domestic household chores) b. scandal (judgmental comments about other people) c. bitching (complaints about their social inferior roles) d. and chatting (intimate talk on mutual self-disclosure). (1980: 196). Jones categorization is coupled with the women's behavior.

Gossip is an interactional phenomenon for women especially in small town. In the context of matrilineal Muslim women, they have live in a large joint family, for them it is not an easy task to access to the outside world when hundreds of other priority or issues revolve around them. The women in the Matrilineal Muslim community see their tittle-tattle as an important form of socializing and developing a much closer relation with the other members in the large

joint family. For them, gossiping is more like a routine. In matrilineal communities, gossip is seen as a more feminine action or conversation by the society made up by the men. But, the men in the community also gossips in a certain other way. The categorization Jones(1990) did can be more related to the women in the matrilineal community than men. The men in the Malabar matrilineal community consider gossiping as a lower form of conversation and hence, cannot have those "real –talks" like women in the society. Interestingly, the men are better listeners when it comes to gossip. Even though they lack in playing their small part in these talks, they place themselves as a good listener in the small-intimate group.

Ex:11. Conversation between a small group of 3 women on a girl eloping with a guy:

W1: iŋaɭu arinjinna ah Zainabu ɔːɖi pɔjiennu

    Did you know that Zainab eloped

W2: eiɖʈu Zainaba, iʈʈa?

    Which Zainab, sister?

W1: ah bakeeinte mɔɭei

    That lawyer's daughter

W3: iʈʈa, Fathimaiʈʈante mɔːɭɔ?

    Sister, is she Fathima sister's daughter?

W1:hmm…athu tanni

    Yes, her

W3: ŋːne Fathimaiʈʈenne kajindʒa divasei Nabeesinta pɔrayile nikkahinnu kaɳdate ullu

    I met Fathima the other day when I went to the wedding at Nabeesa's house

W1: iɳɳale annu ɔːɭu pɔjikaɭaɳaʈhu. ɔːɭɖe kude paiikuɳɳa eaiʈho pijannanne

    She eloped yesterday. The guy is her classmate.

W2: ɔːrkkə ethɔru ʃiːnam aji pɔjinnu alle?

    This is such a shame for them, no?

W3: allellum ah Fathimakku itu beɳam. ɔːɭkke iʈirri mena kuːɖutalla

    This act was necessary for that Fathima. She has too much attitude.

The above conversation is an example of women conversing or gossiping over a domestic topic which all the three women in the group are enjoying.

Gossip for women especially in the matrilineal community, where women's life revolves around the house, for them this subculture is their source of knowing the outside world in a

much entertaining way. During this form of conversation among the women in the community make sure their participation. Even if the women are aware or unaware of the gossip the other people in the group reveal, they make sure of their involvement in it. For the unawareness about particular news, the women in the community respond with a minimal response by nodding, expressions like, *oho, aw!, hmm, aiyyo!, allah!, umm, ah, inta rabbe!* etc. Most importantly, the women share their gossip with other women who are trust worthy in their views. The women share their tattle-title with women with two intensions, first the one who can keep the gossips with themselves and enjoy the talks, secondly, the women who has the capability to spread the gossip to others.

For women in the matrilineal community, gossip plays a vital role in their socialisation. Women take an effort to meet their small group of friends cum critics for the sake of knowing the ongoing news around them. Even though men in the community see it as a negative socialisation, for women discussing the matters around them is seen as positive for two reasons, one the happiness they achieve through these discussion and secondly, there is no male power or domination that over rules their stream of thought.

The gossiping encourages women to talk more and make them happy. On the other side, men are reluctant about their role in this mode of conversation. However, it would be false to say that men abstain themselves from such conversations.

d) Recreation

The topic of discussions in the matrilineal Muslim women is very limited compared to the men and other communities. Elderly women enjoy reading magazines, watching televisions, radio, participating in festivals etc. Ultimately, their conversations will bind to the stories they read and listen. Elderly women love to listen to entertainment in radio including short stories, songs, movie reviews. As they abstain themselves from going to theatres as men do, their conversations ends up in discussion on movie stories with men. The stories of films are often discussed with men and younger generation who has watched it. They often enjoy the songs while they cook for the family. The women sing and discuss on the songs with critiquing the meaning of it sometimes. To the women in the community its one of the important conversation they do more or less on a daily basis. For the women in the community the functions and festivals are of greater importance and women are in charge of the preparations for it. Especially in the case of marriage in matrilineal Muslim community, the man is brought to the woman's house. The bride's family builds or recreates a room for

the newlywed with all the basic amenities. For women in the matrilineal community it is one of the major topics of discussions on re-creating and decorating the room. While men in the community converse largely on sports, on the other side it's important for these women to have interesting discussions on the entertainment happening in the country.

3.5 Humour as a tool of dominance

The term humour is often associated with men. People see men have the ability to crack jokes and make women feel better. From literature works to movies, it portrays women as someone who enjoys the humour of men. Gender and humour is one of the much debated topic. Lakoff (1975) highlights women as someone who "don't tell jokes" (1975: 56). In her study on the middle class American women she found that, "women can't tell jokes – they are bound to ruin the punch line, they mix up the order of things and so on. Moreover, they do not "get" jokes. In short women have no sense of humour." (1975: 56)

The theory on how women don't have humour sense was supported by other researchers including Freud (1905), Grotjalm (1957), Lizabeth Goodman (1992). However, one of the most important aspects these researchers failed to deliver was to different interest to the jokes. The joke perception in both the gender varies. The studies on the variation of jokes evolved in the late 1980's when the researchers identified that both men and women had different perception of the society and hence their humour sense were different. According to Krammare (1987) most of the researchers failed to understand this basic difference and drew the conclusion on women with no sense of humour.

Moreover, the society dominant by men see cracking jokes as a power to suppress someone in a less offensive manner. So, for the dominant male society, women's jokes were more than unacceptable as it would "reverse the existing social situation". To quote Marlowe (1989), "when women produce and present humour they reverse the conventional social situation by putting themselves to the foreground, threatening the basic social arrangement" (1989: 150). Moreover, jokes are more told in a public sphere than in private sphere. In public spheres men with their given dominance suppress the other gender through their spontaneous jokes. While in most of the situation "chose" to remain "silent". Furthermore, the appreciation and recognition is given more to men's jokes than women's.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, the matrilineal Muslim women hold a dominant power structure in the private domain than in public domain. These women are more careful about

the words they chose to say in a public sphere. However, the women establish a relationship with others through light jokes. Jokes for women in matrilineal society are yet another form of socialising and maintaining an intimate relationship with the person on a common ground. For these women the jokes act as a support system. The women produce jokes in a much lighter form than men. The joke extended in the form of support to the other woman is a peculiarity of the matrilineal Muslim women. These women willingly and happily acknowledge the joke about themselves. They hardly feel themselves as a tool of exploitation. On the other side, the men humour sense is mostly about others. Unlike women, their jokes can be vicious and are told at the cost of themselves.

a) **Ancedotes/ proverbs**

Proverbs are the most used dialogues among the matrilineal Muslim women than men. In the older generation women the proverbs are an integral part of their speech. These unavoidable arts of the language are used mostly during humourous talks.

Ex:13. W1: iɳte iʈʈa, ŋa:n paɳi eduttu mariču.

      Sister, I am tired of working.

W2: hahaa, i: atinnu entu panija edutte?

    Hahahaa, what work did you do?

W1: huh, iŋa:ɭde mariɔ:ne kuppilittu

    Huh, I sandwiched your brother into the bottle.

W2: Haahaa.iŋaɭude pujjappaɭante viča:ram i: ɔ:ru kuppinnu vanna dʒin annenna.

    You husband think you are an gin who came out of the lamp.

W1 and W2: //haahaa// (Laughs)

The above mentioned is an example of two women having a humorous conversation. Both the women enjoy the company of each other with humorous jokes and adding proverbs to it. For these women as one was whining about her miseries in her life, in order lend her support to W1, W2 had to add proverbs and sarcastic jokes. As long as the narrative goes on with main plots and subplots in it, also in order to make the conversation more interesting- to maintain the listener- speaker attention, it becomes mandatory to add anecdotes and proverbs

into it. The women keeps on adding one of the most commonly used anecdotes and proverbs in the conversation in their own way seeking its relevance and reasserting the humour sense.

Ex:14.

W1: anakka aijumo?, ah fatimaṇṭe mɔːḷ ,oːdi pojinni

Do you know?, that fathima's daughter eloped

W2: aṇiː? //haahaa// ɔːḷkke athu tannei beŋam

Really. [Laughs] She deserves that.

W1: inṯaːṇi iː aŋane parajunne?

Why are you saying that?

W2: iṭṭa, i.naḷei i pajamčːllu keṭṭiundinni? Amma veli čaːḍijaːl, mɔːḷ madil čaːḍum

Sister, have you heard of this proverb? If mother jumps the fence, then daughter crosses her the wall.

W1 and W2: //evil laugh//

W1: atu seri tanne aṇi.//Laughs// maṭṭuḷvarḍe veetiḷe nadakkumnɔːḷ anakku kuṭṭam parajaːm eppo tanṭe veeṭil bɔːḷe vannu viːṇu. //evil laugh//

Yes, that's true. When something happens in another house you enjoys now the ball is in your court //evil laugh//

In the first part of the story, the women justify the unpleasant news of the neighborhood with the context specific proverb and justifies why the other woman deserves it. Secondly, adding to the example drawn by the woman W2, W1, completely supports the W2 argument with an anecdote. Both these women support each other with humorous anecdotes and proverbs and enjoy themselves.

b) Roleplay

To bring a humourous effect in the conversation, the speakers often imitate another person. Also known as mimicry, the person adopts the targeted body's sound, style, attitude etc.

Unlike the other forms of humour, this is a performance based conversation. According to Morreal (1983), roleplay-mimicry is another form of humour that is more specific. This form of imitation of other person is done more in a private sphere or in a closed conversation by the speaker. Since women are more limited in the private sphere, they try to imitate more on the other person especially male members and older person with in the family. In the example below, in a conversation within the family, the woman tries to mimic her husband's character.

Ex: 15.Conversation between mother and daughter

M: anakkə entha ennu paḍikyanille?

   Don't you have anything to study?

D: illa

  No

M: hmm? athentha?

   hmm? Why?

D: illatonḍu

  Because there is nothing

M: pɔjirunnu paḍikyadi

   Go sit and study

D: //roleplay// pɔjirunnu paḍikyadi

  [role play] go sit and study

M: i: entha enne kaḷiakkuvano?

   Are you making fun of me?

D: umma //role play// entha enne kaḷiakkuvano?

  Mother, [role play]are you making fun of me?

M: nirtiye

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Stop it

D: //roleplay// nirtiye

[roleplay] stop it

M: di

You-FEM

c) Vulgarity

Vulgarity in humour can be classified in multiple ways. For instance wordplays, humourous insults, insensitive jokes fall in the category of vulgarity. But for the society, the term vulgarity is much more than these words. Use of sexual and toilet humours are more of the instances that comes under this particular category. Vulgarity is used by both the sexes in order to break the some sort of existing taboo. At some point either in public or in private sphere these genders use this humour. The women in the matrilineal community use this humour in the presence of men and in a public sphere. Men use this is a much closed group conversation. Moreover in a mixed set of conversation, the toilet humour is mostly used than the sexual humour largely by men.

Ex:16. Mixed conversation between man and woman

W: ikka, ɔ:rkkei appɔ: rabile pɔɳam?

brother, what time do they have to leave tommorrow?

M: annɔd ŋa:n etra vaʈʈam paraŋina, ɔ:rkkə pɔ:ɳamnnə

How many times I have told you they have to leave tommorrow morning

W: ah, ŋa:n marannpojinna

Oh, I forgot

M: annoɖu ka:rjam parajinellum bedham veɭɭatine aɖijil baɭi viɖunnatha //haahhaa//

Its better to fart in water than to tell you things [laughs]

W: //haahaa//ennale iŋaɭu pɔ:ji baɭi viʈʈu ah kumiɭum piccirunno //haahaa//

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[laughs] then better you go and fart and hold the bubble with you [laughs]

M: //haahaa//

[laughs]

Table:3.3. Frequency on conversational topics

Topic	Male	Female	Mid-sex conversation	Male Percentage	Female Percentage	Mid-sex group Per.
Family	4	12	7	18%	52%	30%
Social Issues						
a. Harassment	2	14	2	11%	78%	11%
b. Sexual violence	5	8	3	31%	50%	19%
c. Female dressing	11	13	6	37%	43%	20%
Gossip						
a. Eloping	1	5	2	12%	63%	25%
b. Marriage	2	5	4	18%	45%	37%
c. Affairs	0	4	1	0	80%	20%
Recreation						
a. Music	4	7	4	27%	46%	27%
b. Movies	1	5	1	14%	72%	14%
c. Others	1	3	3	14%	43%	43%
Anecdotes/Proverbs	3	5	2	30%	50%	20%
Role-play	0	3	2	0	60%	40%
Vulgarity						
a. Toilet humor	4	2	1	57%	29%	14%
b. Sexual humour						
	3	1	0	75%	25%	0

3.6 Women as the initiators of the conversation

To start a conversation, someone will have to start or ask something to the other person. As the opening line of the conversation begins, the speaker will have to make sure his or her

sentence in produced in such a way that the listener is able to answer to her in order to have a healthy conversation. One such way to initiate a conversation is by asking questions. An open ended question is one such form that is preferred by people. As present in every language, the speakers of that particular language shorten the sentences for an easy usage. Unlike men belonging to the matrilineal Muslim community, the women have an upper hand in the decisions made in the house. These assertive women question each and every acts and incidents happening around the house.

Ex: 17. Conversation between woman and man.

W: iŋaɭu ebideirunnu?

   Where were you?

Man: ŋa:n ah ʈuʈoriikku vare pojinna

    I went to the tuition centre

W: hmm…? abide entannu?

  What's there?

M: su:rtinne kaŋa:n

  To meet a friend

W: ei:ḍattu su:rthu?

  Which friend

M: ɔ:n ah vaḍakkumparillae

  The one from Vadakkumpara

W: iŋaɭu enthe paranjilla?

  Why didn't you tell me

M: oh! ŋa:n marannupojinna

  Oh! I forgot

Ex:18.

W: iŋaɭu paisa eḍitinnei?

  Did you take the money?

M: ah, eḍuthu

Yes, I took

W: eḍatthu?

Why?

M: chillaraillairunnu

Didn't have money

W: annodu entha iŋaḷu parajatte?

Why didn't you tell me?

M: čevittaillarunnu appo

I was busy at that time

W: aha..!ite nallatinnalla

Oh…! That's not good

M: umm

Similarly some of the frequent questions women as initiators of conversation ask include:

Ex: 19.

 veeḍebidaja?

Where are you from? Or where is your home?

2. eiḍattu?

Where?

3. enthailleam?

How are things?

4. iŋaḷu ebiḍe pɔjinna?

Where did you go?

5. eitellam vaŋina?

What all did you buy?

6. anne inkkei atra ɔ:rmailla, ebidaja veedu?

I can't remember you clearly, where is your home.

7. i: a:rude mona?

Whose son are you?

The statement sentences the women use to initiate the conversation include:

1. pačakarikk·kke entha bila

Vegetables are so expensive

2. anne ŋa:n ebidayo vech kaḏinna

I have seen you some where

3. ippojatte kalatte kuʈʈɔ:ɭe

The children of this era

The questions the women start a conversation are open ended questions. Such question provides the listener to answer things in with much elaboration and keeps the conversation going. Most of the questions the women prefer to an enquiry about the other person and seeking explanation to the situation. Moreover, women prefer to ask more informal questions than formal. In a mid-sex group conversation within the household, the women don't hesitate to initiate the conversation.

Outside the family premises, the men in the matrilineal Muslim often initiate the conversations. The women dominance is not very acceptable in a social gathering except in one's own. Men as the initiators of the conversation, use both formal and informal way of beginning the conversation, depending n the situation. Unlike women, the questions men ask are close ended; they look for specific answers or response from the other person. So the amount of much detail information about something is gathered more by women than men. Since the male dominance can be seen in public sphere, it cannot be completely ignored that, men to gathers certain information. However, it is much easier for the men to be friend people during their conversation. Men more open and acceptable to the public are able to befriend people belonging to other community. They are able to initiate and establish a new relationship over a simple greeting. Since in the matrilineal community has lots of restrictions in the household premises, they prefer to socialise outside their household. In order to initiate a new conversation, the men usually begin the conversation with a greeting along with smile gesture.

Ex:20.

i) intellam?

How are things

ii) namaskaram or aslamuallekkum

Greetings

iii) kaɳɖiʈʈillello

Haven't seen you here before

iv) eɖanna?

Where are you from

v) iŋaɭu thalsseil eiɖanna?

Which part of Thalaserry do you belong to?

vi) uʃɳikkunnu

Its sweaty

vii) ka:ppi kɔɭɭalo

The tea is good

viii) kuppajam kalakkillo

 Shirt looks good.

In the above examples, most of the sentences men initiate for the conversation include statement sentences and single or double word sentences. The men prefer to initiate conversation with people who are not in their friend circles. For them, they introduced a new topic of discussion which according to them will be more productive as well as can maintain a new relationship. Their conversation begin with a more generalised topic or greeting later on measuring each other's interest of topic, the men narrows down their conversational subject. Compared to women, the men have less involvement style. Their conversation is more about expressing and exposing their idea or imagination of a specific topic which they are familiar with. At the same time, women in their conversation make sure there is a room for every other person in the discussion to put forward a view on their topic. Tannen (1984)

mentions about the conversational preferences by both gender where she classifies the women's conversation with a "higher involvement style" (1984: 30) than men.

3.7 Interrupters of conversation

Interruption is can be often defined as the violation of the rules in conversation. Each speaker in the conversation has to follow the rule of turn taking without interrupting the other speaker. Breaking such rule ascribe to the speaker's dominance over the other. Interruption during the conversation is not usually seen as a supportive factor of a smooth conversation. Zimmerman and West (1975) categories different patterns of interruptions, even a minimal response of "yeah or mmhh" can be seen as interruptions. In a good conversation the speaker listener has to come to an understanding or agreement with each other that the listener will wait for his/ her turn until the speaker finishes their speech.

Lakoff (1975) and Zimmerman (1975) in their work highlight on the dominance of men during the conversation. The former's study discusses of men interrupting the conversation. Men were not only seen as interrupters but also the held the power to decide on the topic of discussion, change in the patterns, non – responsive attitudes and so on. The society often conditions the women to talk less and suppress their opinions in the public especially in the presence of men. But the theories of Lakoff, the speaker-listener, male –female dominance vary from one community to another.

In the matrilineal Muslim community, it is often observed that male interrupts the conversation of the females. Disregard to what serious topic the woman is discussing, the men will also try to put his dominance. In a mid-sex conversation, it is often seen that women are the active listeners, subject to the topic. As the women often are not very well aware of the news, incidents, lack in familiarity with the outside world, the men gets an upper hand. Men in the community also make sure than women's participation are not completely ignored so at times the interruptions they make during the conversation acts as a form of encouragement.

Ex:21. Conversation between a husband and wife

W: iŋaḷ kaɖajil pɔjɔppɔḷ paččurry...

    You got the vegetables from the shop…

M: uvva va:ŋi

    Yes, brought

W: aŋo. eppɔ niŋa...

   Oh! When did you...

M: vaikiʈʈu

   evenging

W: oh kɔʃʃallo

   Oh! Great

In the above conversation the man interrupts the conversation multiple times. The listener knows what the speaker intends to tell but before letting her finish of her utterance, the listener overlaps the act. Usually interruption also occurs in an environment where the speaker pauses for a long time which would lead the listener to overtake the situation. But in the present conversation the mode of inference is different.

It is not necessary that each time the conversations are interrupted it is an intentional act. It can be accidental also and its depth can be read through the reaction of the speaker. Tannen (1990) in her work *You Don't Understand* explains, "sometimes you feel interrupted but you don't mind. At other times, you mind very much... different speakers have different conversational styles, so a speaker might feel interrupted even if the other did not intend to interrupt" (1990: 190). In short, the interruption can be seen as something less serious but is completely depends on the context and the amount of damage the controller has performed. At time, the interruption by the listener is taken in a lighter way if the people is apologizing a) to takeover or stop the conversation and b) to add their ideas in the middle of the speaker's conversation. Such context not only avoids a negative reaction but also lead to maintain a healthy speaker-listener reaction. Both men and women in matrilineal Muslim community, as interrupters of conversation use terms like, *athe, ɔ:ru karyam parnjoʈʈe* (Can I say something), *ɔ:ru miniʈʈe* (onu minute), *athe* (yes/ listen), *ɔnnuɖi* (one more thing), *ʃamikjaŋe* (apologise). As the interrupter interrupts the speech, these self-repair positive terms wipes of the negative reaction, infact it also encourages the speaker to continue the process of speaking after a short break. These self repair words also prevent both the speaker- listener from being insulted. In most of the community, we see the man interrupting the woman speech. However, it cannot be completely denied that women too interrupt the speech. One of the reasons for man to give the power of dominance is the existing patriarchy. Tannen in her conversational analysis elaborates on the men's reaction, often irritation, as women interrupts the speech. Along with it women too feel insulted if the former interrupts their topic (1990:75).

Table :3.4 Interruption frequency in male and female conversation

	Female Conversation	Male conversation	Total	Mid-sex conversation		Total
				Female	Male	
Male	-	12%	12%	25%	17%	42%
Female	28%	-	28%	10%	8%	18%
Total	40%			60%		100%

CHAPTER 4

LINGUISTIC DIFFERENCE IN MEN AND WOMEN'S SPEECH

The debate on men and women having a conversational style or form has been going forever. It has been around three decades since the landmark work of Lakoff that cites the major language difference in both the genders. Drawing the examples from the social context, the linguist has successfully explained that gender difference is nothing other than a mere reflection of the inequality the females in the society suffers. According to the dominance theory, these features of the language or linguistic practices in both the genders are a reflection of the society where the dominant one is men and the subordinates are the "second gender", women.

In most of the research studies women, one of the terms that is used to relate to women's way of speaking or character is politeness. Soft spoken, polite, calm and quiet etc. are some of the adjectives used in front of women's speech.

For example: In Japanese, the Japanese Woman's Language (JWL) and Iwate Dialect(ID) spoken in north-eastern part of the country, in order to mark the linguistic femininity, they add *kashira* and *wa* as the final articles of the sentence. Similarly, *desu/-masu,* are two honorific polite terms that women in Japanese speak. These politeness terms are used by the women in their language based on the social relationship with the speaker. While *deshu* is used as a much formal polite form, *-masu* is used a lesser formal or to say informal politeness the women use in Japan (Didi- Orgen, 66: 2011).

Milroy (1980) and Nicholas (1984), the language spoken by an individual is a reflection of their social contacts. People are likely to have different forms of interactions including standard and non-standard forms of speech, depending on the social situation but what the individual engulfs within them is a more standard form. According to Holmes (2005) what Milroy and Nichols argue is "it is not gender that determines the use of standard forms but rather the nature of the relationships in which men and women are involved (167:2005). In the present social situation of the research conducted, one of the important factors that determine the use of language whether it is to be standard on nonstandard is power. As Kiesling (1997) puts forward, "Along with the freedom brought by power…comes the expectation (or requirement) that a man will somehow embody this power in his identity."

The dialect used in Malabar, Arabi Malayalam, itself is a fusion of Malayalam with Arabic. It is believed that the Arabic entered into their language largely because of religion, Islam, and

the occupation. The matrilineal system in the Muslims is a prolongation of the Nair system followed by the Hindus. It is important to look at the genderlect of both the genders in matrilineal Muslim communities because unlike the other Muslim communities in Kerala, they follow a different system. Even though men are dominant in the society, but in the matrilineal system, after marriage, the women get the advantage of staying at her own home, which also doesn't make her as vulnerable in terms of coexisting with a new family, as other women in the same religion have to deal with.

The community in which the study has been conducted doesn't have women who are highly educated. The women in this community remain at home, living as decision makers at their *tharavad*. They are not much exposed to a much social world which marks their form of speaking as a non-standard form of the dialect. Ever since the introductions of television and radio stations were established, these women keep on shifting or to say "improving" their language by imitating the standard form of Malayalam.

This chapter is based on the data collected and will explore the language variation in the speech of women majorly in four different levels i.e, phonological, morphological, syntactical and semantic, further it will also look into the terms of address and reference along with kinship terms in the matrilineal Muslim families of Malabar.

4.1 Phonological variations

The language style used by both men and women are different. The difference in the pronunciation of the sounds varies across the language, dial, ct and gender. Coates in her work *Women, Men and Language: A Sociolinguistic Account of Gender Differences in Language* (2004) mentions about the Chukchee language, spoken in Eastern Siberia, varies phonologically depending on the gender of the speaker. Women use /ʃ/ where men use /tʃ/ or /r/. For example, the word 'people' is pronounced by women [ʃamkɪʃɪn] while men pronounce it [ramkɪtʃɪn] (2004: 29).
Similarly, the Gros Ventre tribe in Montana, uses the velar plosive /k /with affricate in the men's speech, so where the women say /wakinsihila/ (a newborn child), the men say /wadninsihila/ (Coates 2009: 29).

There phonological differences in the speech are not only seen in foreign languages. Drawing an example from one of the Indian language, Bengali, where the /l / sound is often substituted

with /n / in the initial position by men, while women and restricts themselves for the change in the sound in the word initial position (Wardhaugh, 2005: 319).

In Kerala, along with the main language, Malayalam, co-exist its various dialects. Arabi-Malayalam is one such dialect with Arabic influence. Interestingly, in this dialect certain notable difference in the consonants and vowels spoken by both the genders. These differences also vary within the community and caste

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4.1.1 Intervocalic Devoicing

Devoicing of sound is mostly seen in female speech. One of the reasons for female producing voiceless sounds is due to the extreme politeness in which women are taught to talk. The same feature of – voiced sounds exists in the language spoken by the women in matrilineal Muslim communities.

Female	Male	
mattuka	*mattuga*	change
apalam	*abalam*	a fruit
mrikam	*mrigam*	animal
puʈu	*puɖu*	lock
patikukka	padikukka	study
kubə	*kupə*	waste

In the above examples, we can see that men tend to use voiced sounds than women. The feature of devoicing is majorly seen in the sounds women produce. So one of the feature women's speech is – voiced and men as + voiced.

Female	Male
/t/	/g/
/p/	/b/
/k/	/g/
/ʈ/	/ɖ/
/t/	/d/

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Table:4.1: Frequency in intervocalic devoicing

	Intervocalic devoicing		Total occurrence	Number of informants
	-voiced	+voiced		
Female	19	8	27	10
Male	10	22	32	10

4.1.2 Post- Nasal Devoicing

In the matrilineal community, one of the features present is the post-nasal devoicing. Men in the community do have a voiced stop after the nasal sound while in the same words spoken by the women the post-nasal stops are mainly voiceless   .

Male   Female

kundam   *kuntam*   a term of disaffection

mandri   *mantri*   minister

vambu   *vampu*   greatness

vindaviral   *tantaviral*   thumb finger

malambani   *malampani*   malaria

nambutiri   *namputhiri*   Brahmin/a caste

maŋduka   *maŋtuka*   to run

ʈaŋgə   *ʈaŋkə*   support/hold

These are the some of the commonly used terms by women in Malabar where they voiceless stops after the nasals.

Male	Female
/nd/	/nt/
/mb/	/mp/
/ŋd/	/ŋt/
/ŋg/	/ŋk/

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Table: 4.1.1 : Frequency of post-nasal devoicing

	Post-nasal devoicing	Total occurrence	Number of informants
Female	14	14	10
Male	6	6	10

4.1.3 Deretroflexation + gemination

Malayalam, as a language it consists of a lot of retroflex sounds. These retroflex sounds are part of the daily conversations to the native speaker. At the same time, towards the north of Kerala these sounds are less used by the communities largely, the Muslims. One of the reasons could be the dialect, i.e. Arabi Malayalam. Secondly, in matrilineal communities women live a life within the four walls of the house. While men tend to standardise their sounds, words with the Malayalam, women's language remain the same. The deretroflexation process is seen in men but on a larger scale, it's common in the women's language. Some of the deretroflexation sounds are listed below:

Men   Women

pakʃi   passi   bird

deʃijam   dessijam   anger

viʃəjam   vissəjam   subject

aʈʈukka   attuka   grind

paʈʈam   pattam   kite

Men	Women
/ʃ/	/ss/
/ʈ/	/t/

Table: 4.1.2 : Frequency in deretroflexation

	Deretroflexation		Total occurrence	Number of informants
	/ʃ/	/ʈ/		
Female	7	11	18	10
Male	2	6	8	10

4.2 Phonetic Variation

4.2.1 Phonemic variation in the vowels

Vowel alteration is a feature that is commonly seen in most of the languages. At times, the listener interprets the sound closest the actual sounds. This vowel alteration is seen in spoken form of Arabi Malayalam and it's the women in Malabar who widely use the vowel alteration from its standard form.

Phonetic Variation	Malayalam	Women	Men	English
e/i	eviɖaja	idaʈʈu	evidaʈʈu	Where
ə/i	pɔjɔ	pɔji	pɔjə	Went
i/e	illa	Ella	illa	No
u/i	aɖukaɭa	aɖikiɭa	aɖukaɭa	Kitchen
a/a:	ʈappukə	ʈa:ppə	ʈappə	search
a/e	ninakka	Anikka	anikke	you
i/u	eriɲɲu	eriuɲɲu	eriɲɲu	burning
u/e	urumbə	erumbə	urumbə	ant
a:/o	ɔrangu	a:ranju	ɔranju	Orange
a/ɔ	lɔrry	Larry	lɔrry	A huge truck that carries heavy items

i)   Word- Initial

Phonemic variation	Women	Men	English
gh /k	Koram	Ghoram	Loud
c/ tʃ	tʃanta	čanta	Market
t/d	di:bi di:pɔri	ti:v ti:pɔri	TV (Televison) fire flames
b/v	di:bi	ti:v	TV (Televison)
v/b	baŋgi	vaŋgi	Hurry
ʃ /dʒ	ʃaddi	dʒeʈʈi	Panty
bh/b	Buitam	bhootam	Ghost
p/f	pi:rdam firanna	fri:dam piranna	Freedom piranha-fish
bh/b	baraɳi	bharɳi	earthen pot for conserving things
v/b	ballichu-ballichu	valichə-valichə	Inhaling
b/p	Pasmam	basmam	grey colour powder applied on the forehead
č/s	Sampram	čambram	a position of sitting on the floor with folding legs inword
č/s	saiʈa:n	čaiʈa:n	Satan
d/ʈ	ʈuʃʈʈain	duʃʈʈan	Cheater/cruel man (Masculine)
s/ʃ	Sabdam	ʃabdam	Voice

ii)   Word- medial

Phonemic variation	Women	Men	English
p/b	urabbaijittum di:bam	Urappajitum di:pam	for sure lamp/light
k/g	Mrikam	Mrigam	animal
ṭ/ḍ	aṇṭi	aṇḍi	Seed
gh/k	Akila	aghila/akhila	Whole
t/d	tegɔ:du	tegɔ:ttu	South
k/g	ṯigguuga	ṯikkuka	Pressed/crowded
s/ʃ	masiṯiskkam	masiṯiʃkkam	Forehead
d/j	kajičiṭṭu puja:paḷa	kadičiṭṭu pudija:piḷḷa	Bitten groom/ son-in-law
ɻ/j	ṯɔjil	ṯɔɻil	Job
v/b	Kabil	kaviḷ	Cheek
dʒ/č	vačana	vadʒana	Betrayal

iii)   Word -final

Phonemic variation	Women	Men	English
ɻ/s	Massi	maɻi	Ink
ɻ/j	pijə kiji	piɻə kiɻi	fine a small handy sack that carried money in it made with cloth/with a part

			of cloth
	Nijal	niɽal	shadow
k/v	pɔvuva	pɔkuka	going
ŋ/nk	Bangi	Vaŋi	hurry/come
d/ʈ	ʃaddi	dʒeʈʈi	panty
p/b	ʃaimbu	ʃaimpu	shampoo
ʟ/l	Kabil	kaviʟ	cheek
ɖ/d	Viddi	viɖɖi	idiot
ɲ/nt	aɳinta	aɳiɲa	wear

In the above data (i), (ii) and (iii) describes the variation of sounds between the men and women's speech in matrilineal communities in Malabar Muslims. Men's use of sound tends to be more similar to the standard Malayalam than women. But notable features including Arabic influence can be seen in women's spoken form. It is also important to mention that the Malayalam in the Malabar area is known as *Arabi-Malayalam*. A larger influence of Arabic words and sounds are infused into the Malayalam of Malabar area because of two reasons. First, the influence of religious text and second the migration to and fro into Gulf countries. Arabic sounds are more seen in men's speech than women.

4.3 Assimilation and deletion process

According to McCarthy (2003), assimilation is a phonological process in which a segment changes to resemble its neighbour's property (2003: 320). The process of assimilation can be seen in a large number of languages in the world and in our everyday conversations. In short, the common features that two sounds share in a language leading to the assimilation of the nearby sound in while pronouncing the word or sentence. It occurs in majorly two forms of surface assimilation and deep assimilation. In deep assimilation, only a segment of the word remains changed while the word mostly retains its grammatical form. In surface assimilation, the word forms are changed on a syntactic- phonological level.

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For example, the phrase */ ðæt pleɪs/* becomes */ðæp pleɪs/* (Ladefoged, 2006). In this example, the sound*/t/* gets assimilated into the nearby sound */p/* resulting in a more similar or identical sound to the adjacent.

i)   Assimilation of */ ŋ/*

Malayalam consists of six nasal sounds which are used in everyday speech. The Arabi-Malayalam too shares this feature of nasals. Sometimes, in the conversation, the velar nasal sound /ŋ/ is often assimilated to the adjacent sound.

For example, in the word *bhaŋgi*, beauty, the /ŋ/ sound is assimilated to the adjacent sound /g/ pronouncing the same word as *bhagi*. Interestingly, this feature is also seen in the informal Malayalam conversation. One of the reasons for the women in matrilineal community could be, they use more informal form of speech that men. Also, in conversation, the same word sounds as *bhangi,* with an alveolar nasal sound.
Similarly, in the word *koraŋgi*to *korangi*(monkey female).

Along with the assimilation of certain sounds in the dialect, the Muslim women tend to produce sentences into a shorter form deleting the nasal sounds in the language. Mostly, the assimilation process occurs in nasal sounds. This assimilation of sounds is pronounced by both male and female but the frequency in which the nasal sounds being assimilated can be seen mostly in women.

Ex.1: *eviɖeannu aṯṯu* → *eiɖaṯṯu*
         where   that
         Where is that?

Eẋ.2 : *ah   pu:vikkə   maŋam   indinni?   →maŋaidanni?*
         That   flower-DAT   smell   do-Sing,Ques
         Does that flower have smell?

Ex.3: *ɔ:ɭu   pokunnu   ella?   → pojinilla*
         She   go-fut   no-Neg,Ques
         Is she not going?

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The assimilation of the nasals is majorly seen in question form. The above words are formed through regressive assimilation. The whole sentence is assimilated into a word without the change in the meaning. The reasons why the women use more assimilated sounds is the women in the matrilineal community as having a voice of their own, unlike the Muslim women that follow the patrilineal system. The women are much spontaneous speakers especially in groups.

i)   Deletion and insertion of segments

"Deletion takes place when a segment is elided in a given context"(Pandey:2014). In the conversations by women, both vowel and consonant alteration can be noticed. Along with this, another peculiarity found in their speech is that in a spontaneous conversation they have the tendency in deletion of the sound also addition of sounds.

a) Deletion of /h/ or Aphesis

Aphesis or aphaeresis is the process in which the word-initial sound is deleted during the speech production. Mostly in the words beginning with /h/ sound, this sound is deleted in women's speech .

Ex.vi) : *hirdajam* (Men)*irdajam* (Mal. Women) (heart)

Ex.vii): *ha:ram* (Men) *a:ram* (Mal. Women) (garland)

Table: 4.1.3: Frequency in the deletion of /h/ by both male and female

	Deletion of /h/	Total number of occurrence	Number of informants
Women	7	7	10
Men	2	2	10

b) Insertion of /ə/ in the final position or paragoge

The insertion of a sound occurs when onw or more sound is added to the word. The insertaion of /ə/ sound used in the conversation of both men and women. The addition of words at the

end of the words is called paragoge. In the men's speech this addition is limited while in case of women they use the sound in most of their conversational ends.

Ex.viii) *poji* (Men) *pojiə* (Women) (go)

Ex.ix) *dirutil* (Men) *dirutilə* (Women) (hurry)

Table: 4.1.4: Frequency in the insertion of /ə/ by both male and female

	Insertion of /ə/	Total number of occurrence	Number of informants
Women	13	13	10
Men	6	6	10

CHAPTER 5

SYNTACTIC FEATURES

5.1 Syntax

5.1.1 Tag questions

In the language used by women, there is not much to say that women use entirely a different sentence construction; rather there are certain features that are commonly seen in women's language like hypercorrections, tag questions, hedges, indirect questions etc. These features are found in almost all the female speakers of any language. The difference in these usages varies from community to community. In the Indian context, these features are seen in almost all the dominant language.

Tag questions are one of those linguistic forms of speech where "asking questions" is marked as a feature of women's style. Holmes (1984) divides tag questions into two categories; tag questions that express modal or affective meaning respectively. Men are said to use more modal tags and affective tags are more popular among women (Coates 1988: 9, Coates 2004: 90).

Tag question is prominently used by women in their conversation while talking to the male members like father, brother, husband. Meanwhile, these uses of tag questions by women are not restricted in their conversation with males only they tend to use it with women of their age group and above also.

Tags with modal meanings are speaker-oriented; the speaker wants his/her proposition to be confirmed by the addressee and these tags also seek information;

      She is coming around noon, isn´t she?

      (Husband to wife concerning expected guest)

The tags with affective meaning on the other hand are addressee-oriented and the speaker uses them to express his/her attitude towards the addressee, and this can be shown either by supporting the addressee;

      The hen is brown, isn´t she?

      (Teacher to pupil)

It can also be used to soften a speech act that is negatively affective;

      That was pretty silly, wasn´t it?

      (Older child to younger child) (Jakobson, Spohie. 2010)

Robin Lakoff claims that tag questions are associated with tentativeness, that women use them more than men do and that "tag questions decrease the strength of assertions" (Lakoff 1975 in

Coates 2004: 90-91).

In the Malabar area women tend to use more tag question than men. Their tag questions end with a higher intonation marking some uncertainty in their statements.

Ex.i) Woman – husband: iŋaɭu   eɲɲu   kaɖajil   pojinudallo, alle?

                      You   today   shop   go-Pst-Neg-Imp.

You are going to the shop today, aren't you?

ii) Woman to her friend: ɔːɭ   eɲɲu   varum, elle?

                      She   today   come-Pst Neg-Imp

She will be coming today, isn't she?

The women also short sentences to confirm the truth of certain acts.

Ex: Rather than asking the person question in a whole sentence as in Ex.(a), the same question will be reframed as:

Ex. iii) kaɖajil pojiundallo, alle?

        shop   go-Pst-Neg-Imp.

Going to the shop, aren't you?

 Ex: iv) veijil   vijium,   elle?

        sunlight   come- Fut   isn't it?

Sunlight will come, isn't it?

Ex: v) birayani   kajichallo,   alle?

        biryani   eat-Pst   didn't you?

Ate birayani, didn't you?

In Malayalam, alle, ille and elle are the widely used terms for tag questions. In tag questions the speaker uses much polite forms of tag questions. Usually these tags are used to communicate with elders' /husband/ to say men in general.

Ex. vi) Man: ɲammaɭ   ennei   subaidine   kandu.

I-Sing   today   name   meet-Pst

I met Subaid today.

Woman: anni?

        Is it?

Ex: vii) Man: anakkə   ennə   ɲammaɭ   ɔru   baɭa   baŋgi.

                You-2nd Pr.Sing.   today   I-Sing   one   bangle buy-Pst

        I bought a bangle for you.

Woman: tannaja?

        Is it?

In the given examples, the woman is confirming certain claims made by the man with tag questions. Apart from that, these tag questions can also be marked as a imitate way of confirming the claims.

Even the dialects of the language use these same forms to ask questions. Both these forms are used both in a formal context and informal context. As Lakoff says, the tag questions are mostly used by women in society than men. The social construction of the society in which we live teaches women how to "talk". Asking tag questions with a lowered tone is considered as a polite form of speech for women. Men use the same form of tag questions while talking to elderly people ie, a polite form of asking. In men, the tag questions are not much used within the same peer group.

As Holmes (1984) says, "the tags are speaker oriented as they function as the supplement of the speakers' knowledge." The tag question used cannot be assigned with a specific meaning. The meaning in the tag question change depending upon the social situation. Unlike English, Malayalam doesn't have too many tag questions. Further, the tag questions used by a native Malayalam speaker and a woman in the matrilineal community more or less attributes to the same meaning.

Ex: viii) inninni   majə   peijillairikkum, allei?
        today   rain   fall-Fut,Neg, isn't it?

It might not rain today, isn't it?

Ex:ix) ingalu   biryani   kajichallo, ellei?
        You-Sec.Pr.Sing   biryani   eat- Pst, isn't it?

You have eaten the biriyani, isn't it?

One of the interesting factors that is visible in the tag question is they act as a confirmatory tag to an uncertainty question. The speaker uses the tag to confirm certain act depending on the social situation. Along with confirming the answer to the question, both /alle/ and /elle/ can be classified as enquiry tag. While /alle/ and /elle/ remain as a negation marker tag question to a positive sentence, the tags /tanneja/ and /anni/ as positive tag questions to the sentence. The latter tags don't check the truth of the statement by the speaker as the former tags.

Ex: x)   ɔːrə   nampuːtiri   dʒatia, anni?
        That person-Sing,3rd.Pr   Brahmin   caste, is it?
        That person is a Brahmin. Is it?

Ex.xi) ɔːn   ɔru   ibilisanne,   tanneja?
        He-Sing   one   bad person ,   is it?
He is a bad person. Is it?

5.1.2 Hedges

Similar to the uncertainty that exists in the as tag questions, hedges are also used by women before stating something. To draw an example from Hindi, the women use hedges like 'aapko pata hai , 'mujhe lagta hai', etc. In English, we have 'I think', 'kind of', 'sort of', I suppose' etc. If we observe the conversations of both male and females these forms are predominantly used by women. The hedges found in Malabar matrilineal communities are same as that is used by Malayali female speakers like 'iŋaḷkkə arijumo', 'oru jati' (kind of)- this term is only used in Malabar area it is not used in any other areas in Kerala, 'anakku tɔɲɲunatu' (I think), etc. These words are mostly used at the beginning of the sentences. As in English, the women use another justifiable form of hedges in the sentences, being super polite or requesting a person to do an action in a lower tone, this form is not found in women's speech in matrilineal Malabar Muslim women.

Ex.i) In English, Will you please open the window? – will be an embedded imperative
sentence used by women to another person.

In Malabar Muslim women:

Ex:ii) iŋaḷu   ah   dʒannala   turannei.

       You   that   window   open

The women are most likely to give orders than requesting someone to do something. The 'super polite' words or sentences are not much seen in the older matrilineal women's speech. The present generation of women still uses some form of politeness forms in their speech while this feature can be hardly seen in elder women's speech. The similar sentence in example (ii) is used in a request form by women as:

Ex. iii) iŋaḷu   ah   dʒannala   onnu   turanenni?

        You   that   window   please-Req. open

        Will you please open the window?

Ex..iv) anakkə   ṭɔnnundɔ   ɔ:ḷkku   biryani   piḍičennə?

        You-Sing.Sec.Pr.   think   she-Sing   biryani   like-Pst

Do you think she liked the biryani?

Ex:v) nammaḷkkə   kuppajam   vangan   nanel   pɔgamenni vidʒarichei ?

        We-Pl   shopping/clothesbuy   tommorrow   go-Fut think-Pres.Prog

I was thinking of going for shopping tomorrow.

In the present Indian context, hedges can be also used as a tool to describe the power equation between multiple genders. The term "positive politeness" can be expounded in a sense where it delineates the powerlessness of the other gender. The use of hedges is not limited to women in Malabar. Both men and women use hedges in their conversations but the dialect itself consistsof less "polite" terms. In the dialect, one of the major factors that decide if a sentence is in the form of request or order is the tone of the sentence. As Holmes in her studies mentions how the hedges became an integral part of a normal/informal conversation, it is also a reflection of the society.

Ex.v) Conversation between two females:

Female:iŋaḷu e   kɔllam hadʒikkə pɒjiundinei?

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You   this   year   Haj   go-Fut

Are you going for Haj this year?

Female: anakkə   tɔnnunnei   ɲammaɭu   pojikkumennu?

      I-1st Pr.Sing   think   I-1st Pr. Sing   go-Fut

I think I will be going.

Female: passe atu   ɔnnum   ɲammadei   kaeilu alla   rabinte tirmanam, alle?

      But   that   nothing   our   hands no-Neg Allah decision. Isn't it?

But that decison is not in our hands, everything is with allah. Isn't it?

Female: Inshah alla!   ellam   nanaji barum anṭe   khalb parajunnu.

With the blessing of Allah!   everything   fine   come   my-Poss   heart tell-PresConti

      With the blessing of Allah! My heart tells me everything will be fine.

Ex. vi) Conversation between Female and Male

Female: iŋaɭu   birja:ɳi   kajičinna?

      You-2nd Pr.Sing   biryani   eat-Past

Did you eat the biryani?

Male: ah!   kajiččirunni.

      Yes   I had

      Yes, I had.

Female: talakedillairunnello?

      Sort of good, no?

Sort of good, no?

Male: ah!uʃaraji

      Yes good.

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Yes. It was good.

Ex. vii) A conversation between two female and a male

Female 1: anṭe   ummaje   patimuṉa:m vajasilaṉu nikkah kajipičaṭu.

       My-Poss   mother   thirteen   years   marriage do-Pst

My mother was married at the age of 13.

Female 2: anakkə   tɔnnunnu pande   aŋane   tanneajirunnu

      I-1st Pr.Sing think   earlier   that   like-Pst

I think people used to marry like that.

Female 1: nannayi   ebboḷe   aṯɔnnum   illaitethu

       Good   presently   suchthings   no-Neg exist

Good that such things not more exist.

Male: niŋaḷɔḍu   ara paṛŋje   eppo aŋane onnuillannu?

     You-2nd Pr.Pl who   told   Pres.   such no-Neg

Who told you such practices doesn't exist?

Female 1: čilappoje undairikkum,   nammaḷkke aijanjiṭṭakkum

      May-Pst   exist-Pr.Conti we   aware-Neg

Might be existing, we are not aware about it

Female 2: anikkum   atha   tɔnnunne

     I-1st Pr.SG. that   think

Even I think so.

From the above conversations, talakedillairu, ɔnnunnei, and vidʒarichu are the frequent hedges used by females in their speech. These terms are used by both the genders depending

on the context. During the conversation related to household, women seem to use fewer hedges than men while on the topics about society or much broader topics, women tend to more hedges. In the context of the research, one cannot say that these are terms that represent the powerlessness of a gender.

5.2 Pragmatics

5.2.1 Terms of address and reference used by Matrilineal Muslim women

Terms of address and references are used by people in their conversation on a day to day basis. These addresses and references of a community vary from generation to generation. For instance, the terms of address used by older people are not as same as the terms used by younger ones. So age, sex, religion, social ranks etc. all matters in the terms that people use. There are different types of addressing and referring to terminologies that are used in a community. Mostly these terms depend upon the context in which the particular term is used. As the location varies, the usage of words and terms and it's meaning also changes along with it. In Kerala, one can see a huge difference in the terms used by people belonging to different communities. To draw an example, the terms used by Namboothiri (an Upper caste Hindu/Brahmins), Christians, Muslims dialects are totally different from each other. The usage of terms of addresses and reference vary from one's kinship terms till caste based terms in Kerala. Along with various divisions in religion on the basis of caste and they are further divided into sub-caste. The caste and the addresses and references are given on the basis of people's caste; occupations are even used in a public context. This section of this research will be looking into the matrilineal communities of two districts as there is a variation in their language use. The data collected from the Kannur and Calicut districts of Kerala with matrilineal Muslim community has been collected under the categories including kinship terms, occupational terms, caste-based terms, terms used by intimacy/ couples and religious terms.

i) Religion/ Caste terms
A) Women in matrilineal Kannur Muslim community:

The women in the community use the caste-based reference in their conversations than addresses. The Muslims settled in over this place is referred to as ma:piḷa. But they hardly use the term to address them.

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The Kannur region where the data was collected also consisted of Hindus. The women refer to the other backward community (OBC) Hindus as ṯiyar. But the older Muslim women over here especially use the generic term, ṯiyar, for all the Hindus. The caste based addresses are not used in normal conversations but in a situation like abuses or fight, they are addressed on the basis of their caste along with their name like Gopala ṯiyaa (Gopal is the name of that person).

Similarly, the older women address as well as refer the Nair (an upper caste Hindus) with their caste. Like,

nayarkuṭṭiei (nair is the caste and kuṭṭi means child i.e,child of a nayar).

They are addressed as:

a) nayarkuṭṭiyei   ebiḍe   pokụṇṇi?

nairchild   where   go-PRES.PROG

Nairchild, where are you going?

And they are referred as:

b) ɔ:ḷə   oru   nayarkuṭṭiya.

she-3rd P.SG a   nairchild

She is a Nair child.

Another caste based reference is given to a sub-caste of Muslims who speaks Hindi. They are referred as paḍḍaṇi.

   c)   nammaḷə ennə oru   paḍḍaṇiya   kaṇḍinə

           we today   a   pattan   see-PST

We saw a pattan today.

B) Matrilineal Muslim women in Calicut

The terms of address and reference used by the women in this matrilineal Muslim community is comparatively high than the Kannur matrilineal Muslim community. The Muslims are referred as mapiḷara and they are addressed as mapiḷarei.

   a) Reference- ɔ:n   oru   mapiḷara

              he-3rdP.SG   a   Muslim

He is a Muslim.

   b) Address- ma:piḷarei   eviḍe   pokuva?

                  Muslimman where go-PRES.PROG

Where are you going Muslim man?

For fishermen the reference term they use is pusəla:nma:r.

   c) Reference- eṉṉə   oru   pusəla:numilla

                 Today   a   fisherman-EMP no-NEG

Today there is no fisherman.

   d) pusəla:ne   eṉti   mi:na eṉṉu?

        fisherman   what   fish   today

Fisherman, what fish do you have today.

If the fisherman is a familiar person then he is addressed with ikka(brother) behind his caste while addressing: pusəla:nikka.

As similar to the OBC community in Kerala is the Panicker caste. The women use the term paṇikkyar (astrologer caste). They are referred to as paṇikkyar and when they are addressed its paṇikkyarei. Ex: a famous astrologer in their panchayat is referred to as: unnikrishnapaṇikkar (Unnikrishan is his name and paṇikkar is his caste) and he is addressed he is either addressed as paṇikkar saarei (Panicker sir) or as unnikrishnapaṇikkarei.

As per the Islam religion, they don't match the horoscope of the bride and groom before marriage. But with the influence of the other religion around them, the Muslims visit the Panicker caste. The term paṇikkar saarei (Panicker sir) is mostly used by women as a polite form on the other religion/caste while they visit them with appeals to match the horoscope.

The other caste-based terms are pərajan (a scheduled caste) and ṯiyan (backward class).
A pəravan is always referred to as pəravan and is addressed as pərava. Similarly, ṯiyar caste people are referred to as ṯiyan and are addressed as ṯiyaa. Elderly people mostly women, address them as eḍo ṯiyaa. (Hey ṯiyaa!).

The women in the matrilineal community settled in Malabar, also use caste based reference about their husband, other people's wife.

Ex: a Muslim woman would refer her husband to another person as nʈe mapiḷa or nʈe mapiḷa:ra (nʈe means my and mapiḷa means husband in this context but actually mapiḷa is the name of the caste.

The same way a Hindu woman's husband would be referred to as inʈe ṯiyan(inʈe means your and ṯiyan is a lower caste Hindu). Women over here also address their husband with their caste-like nʈe mapiḷe oṉṉu vannie (my husband, please come).

ii) Address and Reference to Servants

There always exists a difference in the relationship between the Speaker and the Recipient when it comes to address and reference to servants. Probably, this feature can be marked as an asymmetrical relation between the speaker and the recipient where either has a lower status
(Abbi 2001:226).

The matrilineal communities have similar terms of address and reference to servants. The servants are referred by the owners of the house by using the servant's name.

Ex: If the servant's name is Abdul, during references he will be referred with his name.
Children or others who are younger than the age of the servant will always refer the servant with the addition of the term ikka (brother) after that person's name. Example: Abduikka.

The address given to the servant is almost similar to the reference. The servant is called by the name by the residents in the house except for the younger ones. The women adding /ikka/ to the name is also a respectful term given to the servant by the people (all the people who are younger than the servant's age) in the house even if there exists an asymmetrical relation. They also address the servants using the pronoun ɲiŋaḷ/ iŋaḷ (you).

Address- ɲiŋaḷ / iŋaḷ   eṉta   baṇi   eḍaɲillei?
        You-2ndP.SG   why   work   do-NEG
Why don't you work?

They are also addressed with ikka (brother) or iṭṭaṭṭa/ iṭṭa(sister) along with their name. If the servant working in a Muslim house and by religion she is a Hindu then, he will be referred and addressed as:

eṭṭan with their name like raman eṭṭan raman is the name and čeṭṭan means brother). For a female Hindu household worker it would be addressed as tʃetʃĩ (sister)along with their name.

Example: sitetʃĩ or sita tʃetʃĩ. (sita is the name of the servant)

If they have a servant who is young they are addressed with pronoun ṉi(you).

Example: ṉi   baṉi   eḍakannille

      You -2ndP.SG   work   do-PROG.NEG

You are not working.

iii) Religious terms

Malabar region of the Northern part of Kerala is known to the rest of the state as a Muslim dominated area. The religious terms across Malabar remain the same as the religious terms are drawn from their holy text, Quran. Most of the terms that they use to refer are people who are related to the mosque. In the context, of religious terms, it's difficult to stress on the argument that women use more than men or vice –versa.

In women in the matrilineal community, settled in Kannur district, address the person who teaches in Madrassa is as moula:ikka or moila:rikka. While in the Calicut they use both mouliya:r and musliya:r. They hardly use another term for referring them. The people over these areas either calls the name along with mouliya:r or they use the term in isolation. Example: Ahamed mouliya:r.

Similarly, a person who visited Haj in Mecca will be referred to as hadʒi/ hadʒijar and the address term used for him will be hadʒijare.

Ex.i) Address- enṯa   hadʒijarei   pattijaṯə?

          what   haji   happen-PST

What did happen, Haji?

Ex.ii) Reference- ɲa:n   eṉṉə   hadʒijare   kandinn

             I   today   haji   meet-PST

I met the Haji today.

Both in Kannur and Calicut matrilineal Muslim women use the terms that are used in religious addresses comes from the Arabic. These terms are mixed with Malayalam resulting in slight changes in the sounds.

Like the term used for a person who calls for prayer at the mosque is called xælfa. A representative person from the mosque who solves the problem and registers marriage is referred to as and he will be addressed as xæliya:r. Another Arabic term is given to the person who calls for prayer on Friday is addressed as xætib. The person who teaches in Madrassa is addressed as uṣṭa:d which comes from the Arabic term ostad meaning Professor. The address given to the uṣṭa:d's assistant is mukkiṟi and if the mukkkiṟi teaches in Madrassa then he too will be addressed as uṣṭa:d.

The highest priest in the Muslim religion (also the other high priest / spokesperson is known as taŋaḷ. These people are often referred as taŋama:r. He will be addressed as taŋaḷe or his name will be put in front of this term.

Today this term of address and reference has almost become like a title that has been attached to most of them that they uses it in their name and in family.

iv) Occupational terms

Occupational terms of address and reference can be seen in communities across the world.e refer and address people on the basis of their occupation.

For example: a person who is a doctor by profession will be always addressed and referred as doctor or else may be if we have to specify the field in which the doctor is specialist in then we add the specialisation field along with the term/profession as doctor like skin doctor, ENT doctor, gynecologist doctor, teacher: maths teacher, English teacher etc.

When it comes to occupation, the address and the reference terms do not vary too much. The influence of English terms being nativized, usage of Sanskrit words, Arabic terms all come together in this.

A carpenter is referred by the people as aʃari during conversations. But they do not use the word aʃari while addressing either they address them with the name or name along with the profession is being used.

Ex.a) Reference: iṉṉale   aʃari   vaṉṉilla

                Yesterday   carpenter   come-PST.NEG

The carpenter didn't come yesterday.

Ex. b) Address: mohaʃari   iɲɲale   niŋaḷ uɳḍakije   kaṭṭiḷ nallatəɲi

                mohancarpenter yesterday   you   make-PST   bed   good

Mohancarpenter, the bed you made yesterday was nice.

Similarly another occupation term used to address the person is goldsmith. He is both referred and addressed by using the term ṭaṭṭa:n. People address these people as ṭaṭṭane with or without his name attached. The children of the occupational caste people are also referred with reference to the profession of their father. Like the reference given to the goldsmith's children will be:

eṭə   a: ṭaṭṭa:nte   kuṭṭikaḷa

these   that   goldsmith-GEN   child-PL

These are the children of that goldsmith.

But the children or any other family members are not addressed by the name of the occupation except the goldsmith.

There are many English words that have been still used to refer to a certain profession. And most of these words are Indianised today. A doctor is referred to as dokkṭar and is addressed as dokkṭṭare!, an Engineer is referred as innginijar and addressed as innginijar saare!, the teacher is usually distinguished with their name as sitaṭičar or maryṭičar etc.

In government schools and in some colleges of Calicut district, children addresses both female and male teachers using the same term saare (sir) .Ex. a female teacher named Sita will be addressed as sita saare and a male teacher named Ram will also be called as raman saare. In matrilineal communities, such similar terms are used by the elderly (uneducated) woman.

They also use ṭičar to refer to the female teacher and maʃa for male teachers. So in certain context, these women don't distinguish male and female on the basis of gender and they use the same term to address and refer to both the gender. Gender in such places can be just distinguished with the name of the person. But Arabic teacher will be always addressed as munʃi meaning scholar. This may be because the Arabic classes in schools are taken by a religious person.

The people over here also abbreviates some English terms to address people on the basis of occupation like a man one who stands near the door of the bus is both called and addressed as kiḷḷi probably might have derived from the word kiḷḷinar (cleaner). The conductor is referred to as čekkar and addressed as čekkare! or čekkarikka! (Checker brother). An Ayurvedic doctor is addressed as vaaidjarei and referred to as vaaidjan and if this doctor comes to one's home and checks the patient they will be then addressed as kampouṇḍar. This term is mostly used by aged people like grandmothers. The meaning of the word has also changed now the word kampouṇḍar means a person who stands or gives medicine in the Ayurvedic shop or hospital.

The woodcutters who come over to the house and ask for woods are called as aṇṇa, it's a Tamil word which is used to address and refer these woodcutters. These woodcutters are sometimes also addressed as aṇṇa meaning brother in Tamil. Similarly, North Indian people who work over there are always referred to as hindika:r meaning people who speak Hindi. They as often addressed as baiya meaning brother in Hindi are used by the people. For the migrant workers, they never use name along with their occupation for addressing and referring. But they still maintain their native names for addressing them.

v)   Terms of intimacy and politeness

Terms of intimacy and politeness are the most informal ways of using language. The address terms used by a husband to wife or by boyfriend to girlfriend and vice-versa gives less importance to the asymmetrical or symmetrical relationship. This section will look into the address terms used by both men and women in the matrilineal Muslim community.

In address forms, the male partner addresses the female partner mostly using abbreviations like: if the wife's name is Sunnabhi the husband would call her as Sunna. Similarly, name Ayesha is abbreviated to ai, Nafeesa as Nafi , begum etc. The wives usually call their husbands with by using an abbreviated form of their name followed by ikka (brother). Example: a husband named Mustaffa would be called as Mustikka by his wife, Jabbar will be addressed as jappu or jappikka by his wife. The women in both Kannur and Calicut use indirect forms of address like:

athe(listen)
oṇṇu baṇṇeiplease come)
iṅaḷu nokkiei(please look)
iṅaḷe(you)

Pet names are mostly used by young married couples and lovers. The husband addresses his wife like kʰalbe (my heart) (also used by women while swearing), ṯaŋgame (my gold), muthei (pearl), čakkare (honey), moɭu or vava (baby)etc.

Nicknames are also used to address the partner. Some of the nicknames that the person uses to call his/her partner are by referring to their body features. Like, a female with big eyes will be called as uɳḍakaɳɳi, a female who has a sharp nose as parrot, kiɭ̌čuɳḍan ma:naṯame a woman whose face has a similar shape to a variety of mango(kiɭ ŋḍan) found in Kerala, mi:nkaɳɳi, a female having the face of fish etc.

Male also use to address the female using terms like ḍi. They call them as eḍiyei (Hey woman!). Similar to this one can see that when a husband is in a good mood he addresses(indirect) his wife as hei(Hey) and when there is some kind of quarrel the husband would call his wife as eḍi (Hey you woman!) with a high tone. In Malayalam, the term used to address a female is ḍi and a male is addressed as ḍa. When it comes to intimacy terms, the term used for addressing the female will also turn to ḍa.

The reference terms used by both Kannur and Calicut matrilineal communities are not much different. The Muslim woman always refers to their husband either as husband's name with ikka or as anṭe kuṯṯiɔɭḍe uppa my children's father or with the name of the child as Nafiuḍe uppa (Nafi is the name of the child and uppa means father). They also used the term ivarə (this person/man i.e, husband) for reference. Females are referred by the husband s as ivaɭə (this woman i.e, wife).

5.3 Taboo words

In languages across the world, there are certain words that fall under the category of restriction. These restricted words also known as taboo words include "verbal taboos are generally related to sex, the supernatural, excretion, and death, but quite often they extend to other aspects of domestic and social life" (Crystal, 1987: 8).

In a language which is the taboo words and non-taboo words are decided by the religion. Especially, the curse words or the abuses we say during an emotional breakdown, why are they called "curse words", and who decides certain words are taboo and other words are not.

Crystal (1987) draws various examples of taboo words that exist in society. For instance, certain animals may be considered taboo: the Zuni of New Mexico prohibits the use of the word takka ('frogs') during ceremonies; until recently, many southern Americans avoided the word bull in polite speech, replacing it by a euphemism, such as he-cow or male beast"(1987: 8).

Drawing an example from the Indian context, the widely discussed word or topic today is menstruation. Women are reluctant to use the term menstruation both in public and in a closed group, in fact, they replace the term with words like periods, down, low, monthly thing, blood in the moon and the substitute term goes on. One of the reasons why these words are restrained from using in the public domain is because they are considered to be impolite, irrelevant in a public sphere, terms of embarrassment etc. Moreover, when a woman has her regular flow of blood, the impurity of her monthly period wills last seven days, and anyone who touches her will be unclean till evening. (Leviticus 15:19)

Peter Trudgill in his book Sociolinguistics: An Introduction to Language and Society (2000) defines taboo as "a behavior which is believed to be supernaturally forbidden, or regarded as immoral or improper; deals with behavior which is prohibited or inhibited in an apparently irrational manner" (2000: 18). Similar to such taboo words, the abusive words which equally fall under the category of "impoliteness". Rather, both taboo and abusive words are linked to each other. The abuses that we use today are linked to the male or female body organs, which are taboos in our society. As mentioned in the earlier example, people tend to replace the taboo words with other synonyms. In abuses or curse words, despite being impolite or banned, abuses represent the power dominance of one over the other. If we look around us on the frequency of abusive words used by us, without a doubt man would top the list. One of the reasons for that is our society has always nurtured the woman to be tolerant and polite, to stand a step lower to man. Trudgill (1983) mentions how the speeches of both the gender differences and women don't use abuses or taboo words as men do.

Emeneau, in his study on the Toda tribes of South-India, focuses on the taboo that exists in the tribe with reference to marriage. According to Emeneau (1937), along with the term "taboo word", sexual intercourse, menstruation, the private parts, including by extension the nipple, the navel, the armpit and pubic hair, to excreta, or breaking wind"(1937:109) are restricted to the tribal community. The taboo words can be divided into six categories: curse words, blasphemy, profanity, obscenity, epithet and insult. Curing can be defined as, "an

attempt to invoke harm on another person through the use of certain words or phrases" (Timothy, 1996: 8). Profanity "involves the coarse use of what is taken to be scared" (Battistella, 2005: 38). Blasphemy "is an act of vilifying or ridiculing the divine being" (Montagu 2001: 101). Montagu (2001) defines obscenity as "a form of swearing that make use for indecent words and phrases" (2001: 105). Epithet is "various types of slurs, such as wop, rag head, bitch, or fag" (Barristella, 2005: 38). Insult refers "to the lack of respect for others on the part of the speaker" (Timothy, 1996:22).

The society in which we inhabit expects the women to behave in a more refined way. Women's language is being curbed by the society while men are allowed to display their every aggressiveness in public. There are also debates over the frequency in the use of taboo words. According to researchers including Holmes, Coates, women use more curse words than men. It is also said that they use such words in order to covert prestige. One of the interesting factor to note in the women conversations is they use more taboo words while they are within a social group of women.

5.3.1 Animal curses

Among the most common abuses or curses that we come across on a daily basis are the curses with the name of animals. For example, in English, the most commonly used insult names are bitch (female dog), dog, beast, toad, chameleon, pig, cow, donkey, monkey, porcupine, snake, bull-shit etc. These words are used by the speaker based on the context. The term donkey is used to insult a person to show how idiot that person is, on the other hand, fox with the adjective cunning refers to a person who is crooked. In German Schwein is a commonly used term that links to the animal pig. This insulting term is used on a person who is dirty or unclean. The same word in Dutch, varken, is used for body shamming. The curse words also differ within the gender which exists in every language. The English word bitch is used to abuse especially women. Kuh (German) means stupid cow, this offensive word refers especially to a woman who not intelligent.

In the matrilineal Muslim women some of the common insults with animal curses mostly featuring the male name and the men use female terms in their curses: For example:

i)   ɲajə (female dog) : ɔ:ɭ   ɔru   ɲajənte   mɔɭə

                        She   a   bitch   daughter

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She is the daughter of a bitch.

ii)   paṭṭi(dog) : eda,   paṭṭi   mɔ:ne

                   You-Masc   dog   son

       You, son of a dog

iii)   panni(pig) : eda,   kalla   panni
                   You-Masc   liar   pig

       You, liar pig.

iv)   korangə (monkey): ɔ:nt̪ə   mɔ:nt̪ə ɔ:ru   korangə   pɔ:le   elle?
                         He-Mas   face   a   monkey   look,   Neg

Doesn't he look like a monkey?

v)   kajut̪ə (donkey) : ɔ:ḷe   ɔru   mara   kajut̪əja
                         She   an   idiot   donkey

She is an idiot.

vi)   onthə (chameleon) : enṭe   kettiyɔ:ne   onthinte   kura
                          my-Poss   husband   chameleon   character

 My husband's character is like chameleon.

vii)   kurukkan(fox) : ɔ:ne krukkante buddhija
                      he-2nd Prd.Sing   fox   brain

He is a cunning fox/ he is cunning.

viii) tavaḷa pičadi(itchy toad) : aḍiču   anṭe   ʃaippu mattum tavaḷapičadi
                                 slap your-2nd Pr.Sing shape   change   itchy toad

I will slap you, itchy toad.

ix)   viʃa pambə (poisonous snake) : ajalokkate   peṇṇuṇa ɔ:ru viʃa pambə
                                     neighborhood woman   a   poisonous snake

  The woman in the neighborhood is a poisonous snake.

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Table 5.1: Frequency of gender based animal abuses used by men and women

	Curses referring to male animals	Curses referring to male animals	Total no of occurrences	No of informants
Women	8	1	9	10
Men	3	1	4	10

5.3.2 Religious cursing

Across the countries, religion plays an important role in censoring people. More than half of the residents in this world are god-fearing or believers. The very same emotion of the people gives the religion to control over their lives and speech in all the genders. With an extra assertiveness given especially to the women, they are barred from using a lot of words as it makes them "misfit" as an ideal woman. Religion not only bars its followers from using blasphemy, but also it curbs them to use religious terms in their speech. One of the well-known contexts in India is the execution of the English novelist Salman Rushdie. The author in his imaginary novel, The Satanic Verses, used blasphemous words to refer to the religion, which angered a particular community in the country. Such anger of criticising the religion comes along with the faith and the training that religion provides us. Presently, people use certain religious terms is used in the form of cursing.

The northern part of Kerala, Malabar region, is dominated by the Muslim population. Islam religion and the mosque authorities play an important role in controlling the life of the people. Blasphemy is hardly used by the Muslims over here. In matrilineal communities, it was seen that women use curses with reference to their gods and demons from their religion.

Some of the curses used in the name are given below:

Ex. i)allah : Allah/God

annodu   allah čodikkum

You   Allah/God   ask

You will have to answer to the God.

Ex.ii)padačavan : Allah/Prophet

padačavan	anne	bertebidilla
God	you	leave-Neg

God won't leave you.

Ex iii) mɔʃil ɔra:ʃ: indirect reference to the god

mɔʃil	ɔra:ʃ	ellam	kannunni
upthere	person	everything	watching

Someone is watching from upthere.

In the examples (i) and (ii) a direct reference to the god, Allah, with different names is used to curse the person. The latter example shows, the speaker hasn't used the name of the god rather they have referred to an almighty who watches the sins of humans. These lexicons come through the religious. Similarly in the following examples, the women use the demons name from the Quran;

Ex iv) ibilis : an Arabic used in Quran for the evil spirit

ɔ:ʃde	keʈʈijɔ:n	ɔru	kaʃʃa	ibilisannei
her-Poss	husband	a	liar	evilperson

His husband is an evil person.

Ex v) eda ibilise : You evil person/scum

The term ibilis is used both as a reference of abuse and direct verbal abuse by the women in Muslim communities.

Ex vi) ʃaitha:n : an Arabic term for the evil spirit as mentioned in Quran

eda   ʃaitha:ne!   ni   gunambidikilla

you-2nd Pr.Sing Satan! You   prosper-Neg

You Satan! You will never prosper (in life).

Ex vi)jinn: an Arabic term, a supernatural character in Quran with magical powers

     iɳaʄu   eŋane   ɔru   jinn   ayi nadannaollin

     You-2nd Pr Sing   this   a   Jinn   like   walk (context meaning: live)

     You live like a jinn.(literal translation) What the speaker intend to tell in this context is "you keep on disappearing like a Jinn"(in the Quran).

The women in the community use these curse words out of annoyance to a particular context or person. Most of the sentences that they use as abusive words-sentences contain connotative meaning. It can be noted that women use more abusive words especially in relation with the above mentioned terms in relation to the religion than men.

5.3.3 Obscene Terms

Obscene terms are one of the most widely used forms of abuses by every gender. There are words contain both denotative and connotative meanings. As defined in the *New World Encyclopedia*, denotation is "the strict, literal, definition of a word, devoid of any emotion, attitude, or colour" and connotation is "a word or term adds elements of emotion, attitude, or colour."

In Greek, the term *coprolalia* would mean as a term with a sexual connotation in it, where *kopros* means dung and *lalia* is talk. Even though the literal meaning of the term means "dung-talk", but as a whole word, it refers to scatology which is obscene.

Perhaps there might not be a single language that exists in the world that doesn't contain obscene words in it. In fact, most of the obscene word meaning remains the same while language varies. As *Merriam- Webster* dictionary defines obscene words as "words containing or being language regarded as a taboo in polite usage." The obscenity in these words lies when the words refer to the human body parts that are "forbidden" in society. Obscene words are used by every gender and community in society. The depth of the abuse varies from word to word. For example, the abuses that refer to male organ as considered to be very offensive than abuse to the person's character. Further, the depth of the terms also reflects on the social class/background of the person but abuse remains to be an abuse.

In Malayalam, the meaning of the obscene words remains the same only terms vary. The words consist of both denotative and connotative meaning, used by both the gender. It's different to differentiate if a particular gender uses it more or less. As the researcher mentioned earlier it also depends upon the social class. Despite the fact that the topic of the research focuses on the matrilineal Malabar Muslim women, the data that has been widely collected from women who belonged to the middle and lower class section.

Some of the words with denotative and connotative meaning are mentioned below:

i) anɖi: the literal meaning of this terms refers to nut, in the context of Kerala to cashew nut. But as an abusive word, the meaning of the word refers to the male organ, penis.

ii) puɭa, pu:rə: The term puɭa in Malabar regions has two meaning one is vagina and the other refers to the root, tapioca.

iii) mairə : pubic hair. The meaning of the word specifically doesn't attribute to a particular gender's hair. If the woman is using the terms, then it refers to the male hair and vice-versa.

iv) ku:ŋdan: the term used by women refers to the male organ, penis. If the term is used by men there is a slight change in the gender of the word, ku:ŋɖi meaning vagina.

v) kundam : a widely used scatological term, shit/dung.

vi) teŋakɔlla: another widely used term by women, especially in a group. The denotative meaning of the term is a bung of hanging coconut while the connotative meaning is testicles.

vii) kaɽiverimon: son of a scoundrel, a term used widely by old women in the matrilineal community, however, this terms is not limited to one particular gender. This term is widely used by young men/teenagers also.

viii) temmadi : debauch person (the reference to man), used mostly by elderly and middle-aged women in the community.

ix) choričilla: this term means itching. It refers to the opposite sex private parts or being frustrated.

x) kadija: Meaning itchy.

xi) temmadi : debauch person, mostly used by women to refer to a group of jobless/ annoying men in society.

xii)   hamukka: frustrated man. A term used by both men and women to refer to men who interfere in unnecessary household matters.

xiii)   tɔdakkə: term used by women to refer to mensuration. It means not to touch. As religious people, touching a woman during mensuration is considered as impure.

5.4 Lexis

Kinship Terms

Kinships are the core units of the society that defines the relationship that people in that specific community share with each other. WHR Rivers (1924) defines kinship "as relationship which is determined, and can be described, by means of genealogies" (1924: 53). Anthropologist Rivers was one of the earliest people who studied on the genealogies of kinship in India. His study on the tribes of South India, *The Todas* (1906), unravelled the kinship divisions in the community as he stresses on the note that the relationship ties with in the community can be "determined through the genealogical relationship "(1924:53).

Scheffler and Lounsbury argue that "[w]here the distributional criteria are genealogical and egocentric, we speak of relations of kinship" and refer to "[r]elations of genealogical connection" as "kinship proper …" (1971: 38, 39). Much more than of the genealogical set up, the kinship terminologies relays on the social system. The terms and the address that the community uses to address the kin are in relation to how their particular system in which they have believed in is being organised. One of the bases that determine the relation of one person to another is the ritual, marriage. As Abbi points it out, "kinship address forms can be divided into two groups. First, non-affinal relations (acquires by birth) where both the forms of address and address are same. Second, affinal relations (acquires by marriage) in which there is a difference in the forms of reference and address" (Abbi 2001:229).

JG Heath in his paper "Kinship Expression and Terms" considers the terms in relation to the "four social parameters: (1) society-wide descent groups (matrilineal or patrilineal), including binary divisions (moieties); (2) marriage rules; (3) postnuptial residence (e.g., with the father of the bride); and (4) inheritance (e.g., from father to son)" (2004: 215). The present study will be classifying the kinship on the basis of mode of use of the affinal and non- affinal relation.

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As mentioned in Chapter 1, the community follow the matrilineal system, where the groom resides in the bride's house after marriage. The land / ancestral property is inherited from mother to their children not from father to children. The father has the right to give the property as per his wish to any children/ relatives. Furthermore, most of the matrilineal community follow the joint family system, where the head of the family will be *karanavan*, the eldest male member in the family. Women are also given the right to make decisions in older days, but presently, this is not seen in the present generation of matrilineal community.

5.4.1 Father – Mother- Children relation

The terms for the father and mother used in matrilineal communities are /uppa/, */ummačči/, /imam/* and /umma/. The term remains the same in the Muslim communities' altogether. In the matrilineal communities, the mother is also addressed as */imma/*, a vowel alteration by the children during the younger stage which later on becomes a permanent address to their other. An older woman in the community was also seen addressing her mother along with her name. For example a 70-year-old woman named Zuhra will be addressed by their children as Zuhrattumma, 65-year-old woman, Nabeesa, is addressed as Nabeezumma (Nabeeza + umma). Interestingly, this address along with the name can be seen only with women. Male members/ fathers are not addressed along with their name + umma.

The parents in, matrilineal communities are addressed as a second person singular term as, niŋaɭ/ iŋaɭ.

Ex i) : Child to father: iŋaɭu   enni   kaɖajil pɔjinille?

                              You   today   shop   go-Fut.Neg

Are you not going to the shop?

The same term is used to address their mother:

Ex ii) : Child to mother: iŋaɭkkə   enʈha baɳi?

                              You   what   job

What is your job?

niŋaɭ/ iŋaɭ is a term used to address to people of the same age group in communities outside Malabar. In the south and central Kerala, this term is considered as a disrespectful term of

address, if a person of a younger generation addresses their parents with the term niŋaḷ. While in Malabar, especially in the matrilineal communities, the term is not considered as disrespectful.

In Muslim communities, polygamy is allowed as per their religion. In matrilineal communities, it was also noted that women were earlier married to multiple people.

Children are addressed by the parents with their name or they use mɔːn for boy and mɔːḷ for girl child. Their names are also attached with the mɔːn and mɔːḷ both for address and reference.

The children address their elder stepmother as muṭṭmmua and the younger step mother is addressed as iḷḷajumma.

5.4.2 Brother- Sister relationship

The brother –sister relationship in matrilineal communities is more closely bonded than brother-brother or sister-sister relationship. The elder brother or the younger brother in the community is taught to be more protective about the woman in the family. The brother(s) from the polyandry marriage will also share the same relation with the sister(s). The elder sister is addressed as /iṭṭaṭṭa/ or / iṭṭat/ and the younger sister is addressed with her name. Sometime they add /kuɲi/ (meaning: small/younger) in front of her name.

If there is more than one elder sister, they use the adjective /mutta/ in front of /iṭṭaṭṭa/ for the eldest and the younger one will be /kuɲi iṭṭaṭṭa/. In the case of three elder sisters, the second sister will be referred with the numerical system, /raɳdamatte/ meaning, second; /raɳdamatte iṭṭaṭṭa/. The reference/address to the sister is also shortened to /iṭṭa/ for a daily basis conversation.

Similarly, the sisters address the brother with the term /ikka/,/ikkakka/ or /eṭṭan/. The term /eṭṭan/ not widely used by the Muslim community. In Kerala, this term is mostly used by Hindus. Presently, this lexicon is seen in the vocabulary of matrilineal Muslim women. For the elder and younger brothers, the adjectives, /belija/ and /kuɲi/ will be added in front of the address term/ name.

The community doesn't use a separate term to refer or address their siblings from stepmother or step father relation.

5.4.3 Paternal and maternal relationships

The kinship terms in the matrilineal community differs from the community that follows patrilineal system. The lineages are connected majorly through the mother. The large joint family consists of mainly maternal siblings and their husbands and children. However, the younger generation is also well connected with the paternal relations.

The maternal sibling relations are addressed as, mother's elder sister called as muṯṯamma (muṯṯa (elder) + umma (mother)- muṯṯamma). Mother's younger sister is addressed as iḷammawith the adjejetive iḷja means younger and umma as mother. The step mothers are addressed by the same term based on their senority. For example: A man's second wife's child would address his father's first wife as muṯṯamma and the second wife will also be acknowledged with the term iḷamma. One of the main reasons that could possibly exist is earlier the man is allowed to marry woman from the same family, siblings. The maternal elder brother is one of the decision makers of the joint family. He is addressed with respect by women, men and children in the family. Maternal elder brother is addressed with the term ikkakka, vaḷikkakka. They are addressed and referred by the younger generation as karaṇavar. The term used by the matrilineal Muslims is similar to the term used by the Nair in Hindu.

The Nair community in Hindus is the only community that follows matrilineal system in Kerala. Further, during the invasion of Arabs and British, many people from Hinduism converted to Islam due to the discrimination they faced from the former religion. The term karaṇavar could be an adaptation from the Nair community or so. This term is only used for maternal uncle and the paternal uncle never addressed with a similar term.

There are some address terms in the matrilineal community that remains similar to the address they use to refer to the paternal relations (uncles and aunts). Father's elder sister is addressed as muṯṯamma,peṯṯumma,petta:čə. Adjectival prefixes are used before the address terms. Similarly, father's younger sister is addressed as a:ma, name+a:ma. Unlike the maternal younger aunt, the paternal aunt is not addressed with a prefix. Paternal uncle or father's elder brother is addressed as a:pa, name+a:ppa. Children refer to father's younger brother as iḷappa, iḷa (younger)+ appa (father).

5.4.4 Ancestral relationship

Ancestral relationships are forms through blood relations or consanguineous ties. The relation with the ancestors built through mother and father, hence called as ascendants. The maternal grandfather is addressed as muṭṭappa , appappa, vaḷippaor beḷippa. The prefix beḷiya means elder and uppa means father, grandfather. Maternal grandmother is called as muṭṭumma or ummamma.

In case there is more than one grandparent like, grandmother's elder sister or younger sister, the younger generation addresses them based on the senority. The eldest grandmother will be addressed as muṭṭumma and then, the youngest grandmother will be addressed as kuɲummamma and mother's mother is addressed as ummamma.

Similarly, the paternal grandfather is addressed as uppappa, uppa- father + appa/bappa-father→father's father, grandfather.The great grandfather (paternal grandfather) is addressed with the term belippappa (great/big+grandfather). Paternal grandmother is addressed as uppumma , uppa- father umma- mother →father's mother, grandmother.

The study was conducted majorly in two districts in Kerala. In both the districts the terms of address and reference used for affinal and non-affinal relationship varies. Following are the brief tables of affinal and non-affinal relationship used by the matrilineal communities based on the two districts Calicut and Kannur, where the community resides.

I)   Affinal terms in Kannur Matrilineal Muslim Women:

Mother	Umma
Father	Uppa
Sister	iṭṭaṭṭa
SisterElder	iṭṭaṭṭa/ iṭṭa
SisterYounger	Name
Elder Brother	ikkakka/ ikka
Younger Bro.	Name
Grandfather(M)	muṭṭappa, beḷippa

Grandmother(M)	muṭṭumma,um mamma
Grandfather(F)	Uppappa
Grandmother(F)	Uppumma
F.Eld.Sis	muṭṭamma,peṭṭumma,petta:c
F.Yng.Sis	a:ma, name+a:ma
F.Eld.Bro	a:pa, name+a:ppa
F.Yng.Bro	iḷappa
M.Eld.Sis	muṭṭamma
M.Yng.Sis	iḷamma
M.Eld.Bro	ikkakka, vaḷikkakka,karaṇavar
M.Yng.Bro	Ikkakka
Cousin Sis.Eld	iṭṭaṭṭa
CousinSis.Yng	Name
Cousin Bro.Eld	ikkakka
Cousin Bro.Yng	Name
Son	mɔ:n
Daughter	smɔ:ḷ
Nephew	mariɔ:n Addressed by name
Niece	mariɔ:ḷ Addressed by

Non-affinal Relation Address and Reference Terms:

Kinship	Reference	Address
Husband	ikka, enṭe ikkakka	ikkakka, name+ikka
Wife	Name	Name
Husband'sEld.Bro	enṭe eṭṭan	ikkakka
Husband'sYng.Bro	enṭe anijan	anijan
Wife's Eld.Bro	aḷiyan	aḷiya
Wifes's Yng.Bro.	aḷiyan	aḷiyan
F.Eld.Sis.Husband	mutta:ppa	mutta:ppa
F.Eld.Bro.Wife	Muttamma	muttamma
F.Yng.Bro.Wife	iḷamma	iḷamma
M.Eld.Sis.Husband	Muttappa	muttappa
M.Yng.Sis.Husband	iḷa:ppa	iḷa:ppa
M.Eld.Bro.Wife	a:ma	a:ma
M.Yng.Bro.Wife	iḷa:ma	iḷa:ma
Son's Wife	mɔ:nṭe ɔ:ḷ	mɔ:ḷ
Daughter's Husband	mɔ:ḷa puyyapaḷa	mɔ:n

II)   Affinal Relation Terms of Address in matrilineal communities in Calicut District:

Mother	umma,ummačči, imam
Father	uppa, ippa
SisterElder	iṭṭaṭṭa/ iṭṭa

SisterYounger	Name
Elder Brother	ikkakka, ikka,eṭṭan
Younger Bro.	Name
Grandfather(M)	appappa, vaḷippa
Grandmother(M)	vaḷiamma,ummamma
Grandfather(F)	uppappa,va:ppa
Grandmother(F)	uppumma,vaḷiumma
F.Eld.Sis	muṭṭamma,
F.Yng.Sis	Ammai
F.Eld.Bro	a:pa, name+a:ppa
F.Yng.Bro	iḷappa
M.Eld.Sis	muṭṭamma
M.Yng.Sis	illomma,meimma
M.Eld.Bro	ammɔ:n
M.Yng.Bro	name+ikka, karaŋɔ:n
Cousin Sis.Eld	iṭṭaṭṭa
CousinSis.Yng	Name
Cousin Bro.Eld	Ikkakka
Cousin Bro.Yng	Name
Son	mɔ:n
Daughter	mɔ:ḷ
Nephew	mariɔ:n
Niece	mariɔ:ḷ

Non-Affinal Relation Address and Reference Terms

Kinship	Reference	Address
Husband	mapiḷa/ enṭe mapiḷa	ikka, name
Wife	enṭe peṇuŋa	Name
Husband'sEld.Bro	ikkakka, muṯačeṭṭan	Ikkakka
Husband'sYng.Bro	eḷačan	Name
Wife's Eld.Bro	aḷiyan	aḷiya
Wifes's Yng.Bro.	aḷiyan	aḷiya
F.Eld.Sis.Husband	Ammaikkakka	Amikkakka
F.Eld.Bro.Wife	muṯṯumma	muṯṯumma
F.Yng.Bro.Wife	iḷamma	iḷamma
M.Eld.Sis.Husband	muṯṯ	muṯṯappa
M.Yng.Sis.Husband	iḷappa	iḷappa
M.Eld.Bro.Wife	Ammai	Ammai
M.Yng.Bro.Wife	ammai	Ammai
Son's Wife	marimɔ:ḷ	mɔ:ḷ , name
Daughter's Husband	marimɔ:n	mɔ:n, name

Like every society, the matrilineal Muslim community too is divided on the basis of the affinal and non-affinal relationship. These terms are used by the community in a particular social discourse. As mentioned earlier in this section, the kinship is also shared terms used by the Hindu/ Nair community in Kerala. The terms vary over time, as the relationship progress. For example, the term for nephew and son-in-law,/*mariɔ:n/,* are the same in the community. One of the possible reasons for the use of the same terminology could be the marriage within the relation, affinal relation. This was practiced earlier in the community, the cross cousin-nephew marriage. As years passed the marriage within the same blood/ relation has

discontinued but the term remains the same. With the help of the kinship terminologies, the relationship between two people can be defined. The reference terms used by the community overtly shows the relation between the kins. These terms are culturally organised and over the period of time its words, meaning, structure, etc too changes.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

Gendered language in the field of linguistics is relatively new area of research. Along with the numerous subfields, this diverse field often remains confused for many researchers. One of the main reasons for the ill-definement is the lack of unified theories. Even though researches have been done, it was a very recent observation that began to study every aspect occurring in the women's language. Most of the researchers during their study narrow downs to a generalised conclusion which marks women's speech as weak and supportive style where as men's conversational style as more emphasized and status maintaining. When it comes to language and gender, there are multiple reasons behind such ever-remaining explanations. The research on gendered language is incomplete without explaining the dominance the society provides to the men. One needs to detach themselves from conceptualising of gender in a passive form. The best foundations language and gender can be laid through a detailed qualitative analysis on language and gender. Unfortunately, many of the recent studies remains scattered over the quantitative work.

The research work titled "A Sociolinguistic study on women's language in the matrilineal Malabar Muslim communities in Kerala" tried to overlook more closely on the gendered language and the trends present in the language. Some of the data in the research are studied in a quantitative way. Over the years, various conclusions on the gender and language have been drawn. The most prevalent among these are tagging women as recessive in nature. These are some of the falsely proved thoughts. First of all, when it comes to question of gender, the society has set up certain "rules" that encourages women to be a part of, in a more lady like activities. Women are seen as a secondary gender by the society and a much support system to a male dominant. Hence, her language should be a reflection of it. Several myths revolve around the gender language as the society wish to believe that women prefer to suppress their sense of humour, initiating conversations and so on.

Along with the third wave of feminism, the construction of gender and their roles, analyzing and creation of everyday femininities and masculinities were re-searched by feminist researchers like Lakoff, Holmes, and Coates etc. Their studies demanded the need to emphasis on the speech differences through quantitative and qualitative studies. Despite the study on language and gender had a nascent start across the western countries, it is yet to come to the forefront in the Indian context. The gender in relation to society and language

still stay limited within the disciplines like linguistics and sociology. There is an immense need to study this area of research at a larger level.

The construction of masculinity and femininity are social in nature, which develops the theory of domination vs. subordination. No woman is born as a subordinate in fact it is a constructed stereotype. Apart from the social construction, if we look into the individuality of every male and female, they are two independent entities that attributes to the socio-cultural formation. For example, in the present context the idea of masculinity and femininity are changing through various discourses. Perhaps fifty years back or more it was impossible for one to think about the change or a shift in the gender roles. To draw another example, as children we are always taught that men desire for their opposite gender and they propose the women. Any reverse role was beyond our imagination. People often forget that the qualities of desire exist in every gender or to say such discourses are imposed upon us through various microstructures. Women have every right to be part of a social group as men do. The qualities of being assertive, dominant and authoritarian are not limited to men and being fragile, vulnerable are not female bounded.

6.2 Desiderata

The research contributes to the framework of matrilineal Malabar Muslim communities in Kerala and their linguistic practices. The matrilineal Muslim communities are not a familiar community for both researchers and other communities within Kerala. The field research work accentuates on the women matriarchs.

In addition to the present research which focuses in the linguistic features of the women's language in the matrilineal Muslim community, a detailed study on their language contact situation could be studied. Along with the theory of performativity, the gender aspect is largely connected to the linguistic resources. The elder Muslim women in these matrilineal community has an in depth knowledge of their old folklores and their traditional performances in terms of gender roles. Through an ethnographic research, the transformation in the roles and linguistic shifts of the female-male can be done in the future.

The present field- research includes interviews, observation of the participants and group discussions. The study was limited to a specific geographical area. As a part of the future research, the community could be studied in detail across various geographical regions since more similarities and dissimilarities in their language in comparison with other community

might lead to new findings. The data were collected in different settings, the variation in the phonology, semantics and terms of address may vary as we move along. The researcher has tried to elicit the data more from the participants' natural conversations; however, there were instances where the speaker was aware about the speech recording procedures. The future research should focus more on a natural conversation than a conscious conversational style. Furthermore; the recordings of the research should be done through a professional recorder as most of the women especially older ones tend in speak in a much lower voice.

One of the main areas that should be focused for a qualitative research would be analysing the speaker – listener attitude. It would help the researcher to draw conclusions on the community's own perception of their linguistic practices.

This thesis also put forward the linguistic practices of the Malabar Muslim women by giving them a voice, a dominant voice or the "power" that once existed within them. In the present scenario, these matrilineal women's identity often stays limited within their household. It is necessary to bring them into light about their glorious past and dominance. The study was conducted with a very limited number of written works available mentioning about the matrilineal women and their language, a major portion of the information passed to the researcher by the older generation of the matrilineal Malabar Muslim women. As future recommendation, it would be of great deed if more works including essays, short stories, historical records or poems representing the matrilineal Muslim women's dominance could be studied.

6.3 Reservations of the study

Doing research on the matrilineal Muslim women in Malabar was never an easy challenge especially when the researcher is not a part of the community. However, it was not an impossible task until one earns the trust of the people. Most of the targeted informants for the study were literate not well-educated. In such cases, it becomes an additional task for the researcher to make the informants understand what the research is on and why is it important to study. Though the community has the tag "matrilineal", in the present context, the men are the decision-makers. Ultimately, it comes down to a point where the researcher will have to "convince" the men first; from father to grandson, before getting down to women.

The second challenge for the researcher would be to brief them about a gender variation that exists in every community's speech. For the speakers of the speech community, it might be

offending at times if the researcher says their language or dialect is different. No community wants themselves to be excluded from the larger community. So suggesting them as a "different" speech community can be really offensive for some speakers.

The research could have been more interesting if the relationship with the women in the matrilineal community the influence of the religion- words were studied in detail. Since the research needs to be focused more into the linguistic analysis, the religious terms were studied only on a surface level.

In certain context, the women informant's data were collected in the presence of male members, this has not only limited the quantity of the data but also they were more conscious about the speech production.

The state of Kerala and the people residing over here are aware of the political situations and ideologies. Towards the north of Kerala, certain political organisations are very prominent. Some of the informants of this study were firm believers of certain political ideologies. Their conversational style, use of terms had an influence on their ideological teachings. For example; some females in the matrilineal community were found with a dominant nature and some with a subordinate nature. It is very clear to point out that these similarities or characteristically feature were the result of their ideologies. Due to the time constraints and to stay with the main objectives of the study, these political-ideological influence on the matrilineal Muslim women's language couldn't be studied in-depth.

The research was carried out in a more focused manner. The questionnaire for the community was pre-written. As the research progressed, more details on the community, their folklores, proverbs, stories etc were recorded. Similarly, syntactical structures of the women's language could have been studied at a much deeper level.

The research was done in specific regions of the matrilineal Muslim women. Since the minority community is spread out to a larger area, for example: for this present research, most of the speakers were from Thalassery. The matrilineal community also resides in some parts of Kasaragod and Kozhikode, mostly scattered. As research progressed very few data were collected from these regions. Later, the researcher decided to narrow down to certain linguistic region. Perhaps, a detailed comparative analysis of the community across the Malabar region could have helped to analyze the patriarchal vs matriarchal difference across the matrilineal communities.

6.4 Findings of the study

The main objectives of the research have been divided into three main chapters and the rest of the two chapter briefs about the initiatives in the field of language and gender and the timely interventions of feminists in this field. The term genderness is a manifested term in the hands of the society. The creation and catergorisation of things under femininity and masculinity is a contribution made by the virtual media.

The first chapter of this thesis has attempted to look into the rise of feminism and the relevance to study the relationship between language and gender. Briefly discussing on the three waves and the theoretical framework, the chapter enriches the development of this sub-field in linguistics. The first chapter also highlights on the main objectives of the research and the methodological procedures. The three waves in this field of study, has helped to formulate the research questions for this thesis.

As the continuation to the first chapter, the second chapter provides begin with the early 19th century studies in language and gender. The chapter has tried to explain the developments chronologically. Though Lakoff's study was the major breakthrough in this field, many other researchers have worked in this field earlier. From a global perspective to the Indian context, the chapter discusses and reviews about the sociolinguistic and sociological theories.

The third chapter focuses on the conversational style of both men and women in public and private spheres. The methodological approach of this research was based on qualitative and narrative analysis. The informant's individualistic perceptions were also taken into consideration along with their judgments. The uses of linguistic patterns were taken from same-sex conversations and mixed-sex conversation. Analysing the data, led to the confirmation on the existing gender stereotypes and the behavioural patterns the society has set up for women. The chapter on conversational style proves that gendering of the language is not just because of the socialistion but also the female language is least recognised. The women remain domesticated in their joint- nuclear family for years growing unaware if the fast growing society. These women's everyday life and topic of discussions stay limited in their repetitive topics of discussions. The notion of the difference in the spoken form of both men and women's speech has been underpinned through their everyday life and their linguistic practices. Each gender's attitude towards the society, their acceptance, representations etc reveals about the construction of genderness. While men use the public sphere to assert their identity, women have to stay within the household and their domination

lives there. One of the notable features in this chapter is the initiation of conversation. Conversation initiations are the leg to assert ones identity and power. In the private sphere, it has been noted that women both initiate and introduce the discussion topics. However, this is hardly seen in the public sphere. A very similar result can be seen in various contexts like interruption too.

The male and female speech varies in multiple levels in accordance to the social background, topic of discussions, caste, class, religion and so on. The study on the matrilineal Muslim women's language has attempted to answer the questions on; the gender difference in a spoken language. The chapter four and five attempt to map the gender variation at linguistic level, from phonological difference to syntactic level through a discourse analysis; the study provides evidences of gender difference as a result of social construction. Beginning with the linguistic analysis of the study, there exist clear differences in the males and females speech at a phonological level.

Devoicing is a feature of the female's speech production than men. The intervocalic devoicing is seen more in the women's speech production than men. Along with it, the post-nasal devoicing and deretroflexation of sounds is more of a female speech than men. The frequency in the variation is due to multiple reasons; men in the community use a more standardise form of Arabi-Malayalam or Malayalam, secondly women spend most of their time within the household. Their way of speaking is more polite than men. The little exposure they get, their language remains non-standard.

The quantitative data of the study shows hedges are more used by women than men. Similarly, the tags questions are used by both men are women but there is a higher frequency in women's usage than men. By using tag questions, women are trying to re-assert their femininity, and re-confirm the truth in the men's claims. Though in certain context, the use of tag question shows the women's politeness, while in another context it shows their dominance in a much direct way.

It is interesting to notice that women in the matrilineal community use more caste based terms to address both male and female of another caste. Unlike women, men use such references in a private sphere. One of the notable features which can be seen from the study include the distinctive features of the use of Malayalam in this community, the women's use of the personal pronoun niŋaḷ /iŋaḷ (you) to address their husband, elders and youngsters. Though this feature is also present in other Muslim community in Malabar, it is widely seen

in the matrilineal Muslim women. The non-variance in the term is a result of the women's dominance once existed in the society.

The presence of taboo words are seen in every community. Often the women restrain themselves from using these words as most of the words signify the female genital organs. However, the taboo words, abuses used by women in the community represent the male genital organs. Broadly, in Malayalam, the degree or depth of taboo is measured by the feminisation of the word content. In short, in the structural and functional aspect in the matrilineal Muslim community's dialect, both masculinisation and feminisation is present.

In short, it can be said that language becomes gendered as we move on. The power, domination, recognition are the inseparable part of it with multiple factors like socio-cultural and economic transformations guiding it. The gender discrimation and domination has changed over time. Once the dominant women became the subordinate as the patriarchy dominated around them. This matrilineal community too was affected by it. Adding to the wound, the legal repulsion of the matrilineal joint-family system in 1925 by the Government of Kerala has also lead to the switching of power from women to men in a way.

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APPENDIX I
Survey Questionnaire

Gender: Male/ Female

Age:

Education:

Name:

Educational Background:

1. In a conversation, what type of language do you use?

 a) Formal language b) Informal Language

 2. While in a conversation, do you use tag questions like "…isn"t it?", "…don"t you?", "…right?"

a) Yes

 b) No

3. In a conversation, how do you talk?

 a) Talk loudly

 b) Talk softly

4. Do you use hedges such as "Like", "Sort of", "Whatever", "For example", "I think"?

 a) Yes

 b) No

5. Do you use taboo words and slang like "Shit", "Damn", "Hell" in your daily conversation?

 a) Yes

 b) No

6. What type of language do you use?

a) Direct Language

 b) Indirect language

7. Do you use supportive language?

a) Yes

b) No

8. Do you use words like "So", "Such", "Pretty", "Quite"?

 a) Yes

b) No

 9. Do you use minimal responses like "mmh", "Yeah", "Right"?

a) Yes

b) No

10. Do you use language like "I think", "You know", "I really"?

a) Yes

 b) No

11. In a conversation, do you interrupt?

 a) Yes

 b) No

12. Do you use word like "Adorable", Charming", "Sweet", "and "Lovely"?

a) Yes

 b) No

• What is your name?

• How old are you?

• Where are you from?

• What do you do?

• Did you ever go to school?

• Are you married?

• How many children do you have?

Questions about the community:

• At what age did you get married?

• Have you ever visited your husband's home?

• What kind of information do you know about your community and its practices?

• Have you ever faced any problem from your in-laws or from your own family?

• Who helped you when you were new to the community?

• What do you like about matrilineal community?

• What do you know about your ancestors?

• Your community's practice is same as the Hindu-Nairs. Do you see any relation with them?

• Have you ever been the decision maker of the house?

• Do you know Arabic?

• Who taught you Arabic?

• Have you married more than once?

• Have you visited Mecca?

• Do you have any contact with your in laws?

•How often do you meet them?

•Have you ever lived with your in laws?

•What do you know about the matrilineal and patrilineal community?

•What does your father do?

•Do you live with your family at present?

•Do you believe that women and men speak differently?

•If ─Yes,

•Why do you think so?

• What differences do you find about the language use patterns of women and men?

• Can you please tell me how do the male members of your family talk to you?

• How do you talk to them?

• About what do you talk to them mostly?

• What according to you are the most discussed topics among the male members of your family belonging to the same age group?

•What in your opinion are the topics that the men in your family discuss mostly with the women of the same age group?

• Do the male members of your family talk to each other in the same way?

• If —Yes,

• How do they talk to each other?

• If —No,

• What differences do you find in their language use patterns?

• Why do you think these differences are there?

• In a family discussion, where everyone is present how do the family members talk to each other?

• Who in such situations talk more than others?

• Why do they talk more in your opinion?

• Which topics are usually discussed in such situations?

• How do you talk to your servant or maid?

• How do they talk to you?

• Have you ever noticed any difference in their language use patterns?

• If —Yes,

• What are the differences?

• Have you ever noticed any difference in their speech pattern?

• If —Yes,

• What differences have you found?

Use of Language Patterns in various contexts:

• Can you please brief me about your language use patterns with your female friends circle?

•What kind of conversations do you usually have with your female friends?

• What sort of language use patterns do you have with your male i.e. family members or friends?

• How do the male friends of yours talk to you?

• What topic or issues do you and your female friends discuss mostly?

•What topic or issues do you and your male members and friends discuss mostly?

• Which topic or issues do you and other male-female mixed-talk?

• Do you think that your male friends and female friends speak differently?

• If —Yes,

• Why do you think they talk differently?

• Who according to you talk more in a mixed-talk situation?

• What in your opinion is/are responsible for this?

• Have you ever noticed any gender difference in language spoken among you and your friends, both male and female?

• If —Yes,

• Do you think there is existence of —Women's Language?

• If —Yes,

• What in your opinion are the features of women's language?

• How does it differ from that of —Men's Language?

• Do you think that all the women in the matrilineal Muslim community follow women's language?

• If —Yes,

• Why do you think so?

• If —No,

• What do they follow then?

• Do you think there is a difference in the women's language in other communities?

• Do you think that language facilitates construction of gender identity?

• If —Yes,

• Why do you think so?

• How does language facilitate gender identity?

• What other factors help in this process?

• Do you think that learning a language is determined by gender?

• Do you think that usage of language is determined by gender?

• Can you please provide some examples of this?

• Do you know about —Sexist Language?

• If —Yes,

• What do you know about this?

• Who are more likely to use this language?

• What are some examples of sexist language?

• Have you ever experienced such language?