CHAPTER IV

IDENTIFICATION OF
PHONOLOGICAL VARIABLES
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4.0. General

This chapter gives an evaluation of the data collected for the study and documents the systematic phonological differences found in the speech of the informants. It presents the phonological variations in different speech styles selected for the study.

4.1. The background

One of the characteristic features of language is its variability. People communicate to each other and understand the purpose of communication also. At the same time, no two speakers speak exactly alike. This aspect further establishes individual differences. The individual speakers with these differences are connected with other people when they assume roles in different social contexts. The speakers possessing similar social status form a subgroup within a society. Each subgroup of a society possesses specific linguistic features particular to their own group. The child which enters into this world is not completely exposed to the totality of its mother tongue, but to the language variety belonging to one of the subgroups of a society. Naturally the child tends to adopt and use the language along with the social implications associated with
the language. This sociolinguistic aspect of language use and attitude motivated the researcher to undertake the present study. William Bright's (1976:32) view about 'the systematic variations' found in a language may be a relevant point to be noted here:

'within any recognizable speech community, variations are normally found on all levels of linguistic structure - phonological, grammatical, and lexical. Some of the variations are correlated with geographic location. Some of the variations may depend on the identity of the person spoken to or spoken about. Other variations are correlated with the identity of the speaker. These include cases of difference between men's and women's speech. Linguistic variation may also be correlated with the social status of the speakers (or) may be correlated with other facts in the social and cultural context'.

The present study focuses on all these aspects of language variation except the geographical variation and also delimits its scope to the phonological level. The study also aims at identifying the variations in the following phonological elements.
1. Vowels
2. Diphthongs
3. Laterals
4. Nasalization and
5. Voice

Sociophonological correlation is given primary importance and the stylistic variations in sounds that arise due to the following five contextual styles selected for the study has received secondary importance in this research.

1. Casual speech - spontaneous speech
2. Careful speech - description stimulated by pictures.
3. Words list - reading the words in isolation.
4. Passage reading - reading the words in sequence passage.
5. Minimal pairs - reading the word pairs - words which contain different phonemes appearing in similar context.

There is a difference in pronunciation between the sounds occurring in individual words and in connected speech. It was therefore determined to examine both the situations and make a comparison of them.
4.2. Phonological variables

The nature of any diglossic language is such that it shows a gap between the written and spoken varieties. This research does not aim at measuring the gap between the written and the spoken varieties. It studies the speech behaviour, namely, pronouncing or reading words in isolation or in connected speech as per the contextual styles selected for the study. This section presents the phonological variables identified from the data. The correlation of the social characteristics with the specific speech habits of a group of speakers has been discussed in the next chapter. The strategies for bringing phonological variations such as insertion, deletion, and change of the sounds, the sound types where variations occur (vowel, consonant), the structural positions where the sounds vary (initial, medial and final), and the contextual speech style (such as casual speech, careful speech, words list, passage reading and minimal pairs) are taken as parameters for identifying and describing the phonological variations in speech.

4.2.1. Vowels

4.2.1.1. Casual speech

4.2.1.1.1. Initial position

4.2.1.1.1.1. Deletion

/aappil/ ----> /[aa]ppil/ - 1

'apple' //[a]ppil/ - 2

(aa---->a)
The illustration No.1 shows the common pattern used by the informants and the illustration No.2 shows the deviation.

4.2.1.1.2. Change

\[
\begin{align*}
/lakṣmi/ & \rightarrow /l[ə]ccumi/ \quad - 1 \\
'\text{a personal name}' & \rightarrow /l[E]ccumi/ \quad - 2 \\
(ə \rightarrow E) \\
/illai/ & \rightarrow /[I]llla/ \quad - 1 \\
'\text{no}' & \rightarrow /[a]llla/ \quad - 2 \\
(I \rightarrow a) \\
/putṭakam/ & \rightarrow /p[i]stakō/ \quad - 1 \\
'\text{book}' & \rightarrow /p[o]stakō/ \quad - 2 \\
(i \rightarrow o) \\
/sumantu koṇtu/ & \rightarrow /s[o]manṭuṭtu/ \quad - 1 \\
'\text{being carried}' & \rightarrow /s[E]manṭuṭtu/ \quad - 2 \\
(o \rightarrow E)
\end{align*}
\]

4.2.1.1.2. Medial position

4.2.1.1.2.1. Insertion

\[
\begin{align*}
/imsai/ & \rightarrow /imsa/ \quad - 1 \\
'torture' & \rightarrow /im[i]sa/ \quad - 2 \\
& \rightarrow /im[I]sa/ \quad - 3 \\
(g \rightarrow i, I)
\end{align*}
\]
There are two variations as shown by illustrations no. 2 and 3.

\[
\begin{align*}
/kri\text{\textsuperscript{\textregistered}}nam/ & \quad \rightarrow \quad /kr[\text{i}]snan/ \\
'\text{personal name}' & \quad \rightarrow \quad (i\rightarrow ii) \\
/enn\text{\textregistered}ti/ & \quad \rightarrow \quad /enn[aa]\text{\texttilde}ti/ \\
'\text{what-she}' & \quad \rightarrow \quad (a\rightarrow aa) \\
/vi\text{\textregistered}laiya\text{\textregistered}atuveen/ & \quad \rightarrow \quad /vel[\text{\textregistered}++]=tuve\text{\textregistered}/ \\
'\text{play - I}' & \quad \rightarrow \quad (a\rightarrow \text{\textregistered})
\end{align*}
\]

In the above illustrations length of phoneme has been inserted as a phoneme.

\[
\begin{align*}
/pa\text{\textregistered}maava\text{\textregistered}ti/ & \quad \rightarrow \quad /pa[\text{\textregistered}i]maava\text{\textregistered}ti/ \\
'\text{a personal name}' & \quad \rightarrow \quad (\text{\textregistered}\rightarrow i)
\end{align*}
\]

4.2.1.1.2.2. Deletion

\[
\begin{align*}
/varisaiyaaka/ & \quad \rightarrow \quad /var[\text{\textregistered}]sayaa/ \\
'in order' & \quad \rightarrow \quad (i\rightarrow \text{\textregistered}) \\
/vaayilee/ & \quad \rightarrow \quad /vaay[\text{\textregistered}]la/ \\
'in the mouth' & \quad \rightarrow \quad (i\rightarrow \text{\textregistered}) \\
/e\text{\textregistered}kkeeyoo/ & \quad \rightarrow \quad /e\text{\textregistered}k[\text{\textregistered}]yoo/ \\
'somewhere' & \quad \rightarrow \quad (ee\rightarrow \text{\textregistered}) \\
/saya\text{\textregistered}tiram/ & \quad \rightarrow \quad /saay[\text{\textregistered}]nt[\text{\textregistered}]o\text{\textregistered}ram/ \\
'evening' & \quad \rightarrow \quad (a\rightarrow \text{\textregistered}) \\
& \quad (i\rightarrow \text{\textregistered})
\end{align*}
\]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Word</th>
<th>New Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/vilaiyaatuveen/</td>
<td>/veḷaa[∅]tuveē/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'play-I'</td>
<td>(yaa--&gt;∅)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/javuli/</td>
<td>/jav[∅]li/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'cloth'</td>
<td>(u--&gt;∅)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/eluti/</td>
<td>/el[∅]ti/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'having written'</td>
<td>(u--&gt;∅)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/oru uurula/</td>
<td>/or[∅]uur[∅]la/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'in a town'</td>
<td>(u--&gt;∅)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/saayantiram/</td>
<td>/saayant[ʌ]ram/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'evening'</td>
<td>(i--&gt;ʌ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/javuli/</td>
<td>/j[ə]vli/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'cloth'</td>
<td>(ʌ--&gt;ə)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/parittu/</td>
<td>/pr[o]riccu/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'having plucked'</td>
<td>(ʌ--&gt;o)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kaṭṭi/</td>
<td>/k[e]ṭṭi/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'boil'</td>
<td>(ʃ--&gt;e)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/pootum polutu/</td>
<td>/poot[ʌ]mpoottu/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'at the time of dropping'</td>
<td>(i--&gt; )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/nammai/</td>
<td>/nam[b]le/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'us'</td>
<td>(mʌ--&gt;b)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.1.1.3. Final position

In the final position except deletions that too, the deletion of the vowel 'u' no other changes were found.

4.2.1.1.3.1. Deletion

/etuṭtuṭtu/ ----> /etuṭtuṭ/
'having taken' (-tu-->Ø)

/vantuṭtu/ ----> /vantuṭ/
'having come' (-tu-->Ø)

/innoru/ ----> /innor/
'another' (-u-->Ø)

/erumpu/ ----> /erump/
'ant' (-u-->Ø)

4.2.1.2. Careful speech

4.2.1.2.1. Initial position

4.2.1.2.1.1. Deletion

/puu/ ----> /p[i]/
'flower' (uu-->i)

In Tamil, since length of the vowel leads to semantic difference, it has been considered as a separate phoneme. The above item illustrates the deletion of the length of the vowel.
4.2.1.2.1.3. Change

/alukiraan/ ------> /[/ə]lukaɾaʔa/  
'cries-he'  
/[ə]luvaɾaʔa/  
/[^]laɾaʔa/  
(ə ----> ^)

/naŋtu/ ------> /n[e]ŋtu/  
'crab'  
(ə ---> e)

/saami/ ------> /sv[ə]mi/  
'god'  
(ɔ ---> ɔ)

4.2.1.2.2. Medial position

4.2.1.2.2.1. Deletion

/aatukiɾaal/ ------> /aat[^]ɾaal/  
'dances-she'  
/aat[^]ɾaal/  
( ^ ---> ϕ)

/oootukiɾaan/ ------> /ooot[^]ɾaʔa/  
'runs-he'  
/ooot[^]ɾaʔa/  
(n ---> ϕ)

/kumputukiɾaan/ ------> /kum[bə]ɾaʔa/  
'prays-he'  
/kum[^]ɾaʔa/  
(bə ---> ϕ)

4.2.1.2.2.2. Change

/patineṭtu/ ------> /pat[^]iɾeṭtu/  
'eighteen'  
/pat[^]ɾeṭtu/  
(i ---> ^)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Phoneme</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/uṭaikkiraan/</td>
<td>/*t[ə]kkiraа/</td>
<td>'breaks-he'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/kumputukiraan/</td>
<td>/kump[i]t[i]raа/</td>
<td>'prays-he'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.2.3. Final position

4.2.1.2.3.1. Insertion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Phoneme</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/kappal/</td>
<td>/kappal[i]/</td>
<td>'ship'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ṭeehkaay/</td>
<td>/ṭeehkaay[I]/</td>
<td>'coconut'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ṭeeI/</td>
<td>/ṭeeI[i]/</td>
<td>'scorpion'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/mayI/</td>
<td>/mayI[i]/</td>
<td>'peacock'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/puu/</td>
<td>/puu[vi]/</td>
<td>'flower'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1.2.3.2. Deletion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Phoneme</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/roojaappu/</td>
<td>/roojaapp[i]/</td>
<td>'rose'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(а---I)
(i---^, ^)
(uu---i)
4.2.1.2.3.3. Change

/țennai maram/ -----> /țennamar[ö]/
'coconut tree' /țeenamar[ő]/
(a-->ő, ŷ)

/ałukiɾaän/ -----> /ałukiɾ[aă]/
'cries-he' (aa-->aă)

/eerukiɾaän/ -----> /eerukiɾ[aă]/
'climbs-he' (aa-->aă)

/uțaikkiɾaän/ -----> /țakkiɾ[aă]/
'breaks-he' (aa-->aă)

/kumputukiɾaän/ -----> /kumpaṭar[aă]/
'prays-he' (aa-->aă)

4.2.1.3. Words list

4.2.1.3.1. Initial position

4.2.1.3.1.1. Deletion

/iitti/ -----> /[II]tti/
'spear' /[I]tti/
(II-->I)

4.2.1.3.1.2. Change

/ammaa/ -----> /[ə]mmaa/
'mother' /[ʌ]mmaa/
(ə-->ʌ)

/appaa/ -----> /[ə]ppaa/
'father' /[ʌ]ppaa/
(ə-->ʌ)
4.2.1.3.2. Medial position

4.2.1.3.2.1. Deletion

/\texttt{vaanauurti}/ \quad \longrightarrow \quad /\texttt{v[aa]na[uu]rti}/
'aeroplane'
\hspace{1em} \quad /\texttt{v[aa]na[i]rti}/
\hspace{1em} \quad /\texttt{v[^A]na[uu]rti}/
\hspace{1em} \quad (aa\rightarrow[^A],
\hspace{1em} \quad uu\rightarrow i)

/\texttt{annaasippalam}/ \quad \longrightarrow \quad /\texttt{ann[aa]sippalam}/
'pine apple'
\hspace{1em} \quad /\texttt{ann[a]sippalam}/
\hspace{1em} \quad (aa\rightarrow a)

/\texttt{takk^o lip palam}/ \quad \longrightarrow \quad /\texttt{takk[^o]lippalam}/
'tomato'
\hspace{1em} \quad /\texttt{takk[^i]lippalam}/
\hspace{1em} \quad ([^o]\rightarrow [i])

4.2.1.3.2.2. Change

/\texttt{kattaripuu}/ \quad \longrightarrow \quad /\texttt{katt[^i]rippuu}/
'flower of brinjal'
\hspace{1em} \quad /\texttt{katt[^i]rippuu}/
\hspace{1em} \quad (^[^i]\rightarrow i)

4.2.1.4. Passage reading

4.2.1.4.1. Initial position

4.2.1.4.1.1. Deletion

/\texttt{aavaar}/ \quad \longrightarrow \quad /\texttt{[aa]v[aa]r}/
'be(hon)'
\hspace{1em} \quad /\texttt{[aa]v[\theta]r}/
\hspace{1em} \quad /\texttt{[^A]v[^A]r}/
\hspace{1em} \quad (aa\rightarrow[^A],
\hspace{1em} \quad aa\rightarrow ^[^A])
4.2.1.4.2. Medial position

4.2.1.4.2.1. Deletion

4.2.1.4.2.2. Change

4.2.1.5. Minimal pairs

4.2.1.5.1. Initial position

4.2.1.5.1.1. Deletion
4.2.2. Diphthongs

Diphthongs lose their quality and are changed into monophthongs mostly, as the result of the existence of Tamil diglossic situation. In the present study diphthongs were found to be few in quantity in the speech behaviour of the informants. Variations which could be socially associated were not found much through this study. The appearance of diphthongs in the casual speech context is given below.

4.2.2.1. Casual speech

4.2.2.1.1. Initial position

4.2.2.1.1.1. Deletions

/payyan/ ---> /p[əy]yan/
'boy' /p[ʌ]yan/  
(əy-->ʌ)

/oottu/ ---> /[o]ttu/  
'drive' /[o]ttu/  
(oo-->o)

/uural/ ---> /[u]ral/  
'fermented liquid' /[i]ral/  
(uu-->i)
No variations could be found in careful speech and passage reading style, since they occur in accordance with the spoken language.
4.2.3. Laterals

This section is concerned with the nature of the three Tamil laterals. The statistical description of the data shows the number of informants who maintain the sounds and also those who change the sounds in different contexts.

4.2.3.1. Alveolar

4.2.3.1.1. Casual speech

4.2.3.1.1.1. Initial position

In Tamil only the alveolar lateral occurs in the initial position, but in the data at hand the alveolar lateral, occurring in the casual speech context in the initial position of words was not found except in few foreign words and personal names like,

/liivu/ 'holiday'
/laccumi/ 'a personal name'

4.2.3.1.1.2. Medial position

4.2.3.1.1.2.1. Maintenance

The alveolar lateral was qualitatively maintained in the medial position, by most of the informants in their casual speech. The analysis shows on the average that 89.43% of speakers have used this lateral correctly in their spontaneous speech. Some of the words, with medial alveolar lateral, pronounced correctly are given below.
4.2.3.1.2.2. Change

The alveolar lateral occurring in the medial position, in spite of its being maintained, in few cases, has changed into retroflex lateral. The alveolar lateral has changed into retroflex lateral in the speech of informants. Out of the 123 informants selected for the study 10.56% percentage show change.

4.2.3.1.3. Final positions

4.2.3.1.3.1. Maintenance

With reference to the occurrence of the alveolar lateral in the final position, it was found that 93.49% of the informants have maintained it in the final position.
4.2.3.1.1.3.2. Change

Among the total 123 informants selected for the study 7.31% of informants have changed the alveolar lateral into the retroflex lateral.

/pallu/ -----> /palli/
'tooth/ (11---->l)
/ne-laalu/ -----> /ne-laalu/
'shadow/ (l---->l)
/paayila/ -----> /paayila/
'in the mat' (l---->l)
/pullu/ -----> /pullu/
'grass' (11---->l)
/vaalu/ -----> /vaalulu/
'tail' (l---->l)

4.2.3.1.2. Careful speech

4.2.3.1.2.1. Medial position

4.2.3.1.2.1.1. Maintenance

78.86% of informants have correctly pronounced the alveolar lateral in the word medial position, in their careful speech. That is, when explaining the pictures given as clues.

/koolam/ 'a drawing on the floor'
4.2.3.1.2.1.2. Change

Change of the alveolar lateral into the retroflex lateral was found among 21.13% of informants.

/koolam/  --->  /koolam/
'a drawing on the floor'  (1-->1)
/paalam/  --->  /paalam/
'bridge'  (1-->1)

4.2.3.1.2.2. Final position
4.2.3.1.2.2.1. Maintenance

At the word final position, the alveolar lateral was maintained correctly in the speech of 79.87% informants. The words that were pronounced correctly are:

/mayil/  'peacock'
/eli/  'rat'
/maalai/  'garland'

4.2.3.1.2.2.1. Change

Alveolar lateral was changed into retroflex lateral in the word final position. 20.12% of informants have changed the alveolar lateral into retroflex lateral.

/maalai/  --->  /maalai/
'garland'  (1-->1)
/palli/  --->  /palli/
'lizard'  (11-->11)
4.2.3.1.3. Word list

4.2.3.1.3.1. Medial position

4.2.3.1.3.1.1. Maintenance

65.71% of informants have maintained the alveolar lateral sound while reading the words list. The words showing alveolar lateral maintenance are

/kalam/ 'bowl'
/Čaukaatci/ 'television'

4.2.3.1.3.1.2. Change

The alveolar lateral was changed into retroflex lateral in few cases only. The change was found in the speech of 7.85% informants. The words which were changed in such a way are

/kalam/ ----> /kalam/
'bowl' (1--->1)
/Čaukaatci/ ----> /Čaukaatci/
'television' (1--->1)

In the task of reading words list given to check the pronunciation of the laterals, it was found that 26.42% of informants failed to read.
4.2.3.1.3.2. Final position

4.2.3.1.3.2.1. Maintenance

61.57% of informants have used the alveolar lateral occurring in the final position distinctively. Some examples revealing the maintenance of alveolar lateral are the following:

/palli/  'lizard'
/valaiyal/  'bangle'
/sunṭeli/  'mouse'
/kooyil/  'temple'

4.2.3.1.3.2.2. Change

The alveolar lateral has changed into retroflex lateral in the speech of 12.79% informants.

/palli/  ------>  /palli/
'lizard'  (1l-->1l)
/valaiyal/  ------>  /valaiyal/
'bangle'  (1-->l)
/sunṭeli/  ------>  /sunṭeli/
'mouse'  (1-->l)

In the final position 25.60% of informants were unable to read the words list given for reading.
4.2.3.1.4. Passage reading

In this kind of reading also 26.82% of informants could not read the passage which included the words with alveolar lateral in the medial position.

4.2.3.1.4.1. Medial position

4.2.3.1.4.1.1. Maintenance

In the passage given for reading, 70.73% of informants have used the alveolar lateral sound accurately. /ilaikaľukku/ 'leaves' /talaιiyil/ 'in the head'

4.2.3.1.4.1.2. Change

In very few cases, the alveolar lateral has changed into retroflex lateral. The percentage of change is 2.43% only.

/ilaikaľukku/ ----> /ilaikaľukku/ 'leaves' (1-->1)

4.2.3.1.4.2. Final position

27.64% of informants could not read the passage and maintain the alveolar lateral in the final position.

4.2.3.1.4.2.1. Maintenance

72.35% of informants have maintained the alveolar lateral sound correctly in the final position.

/sila/ 'few'
/etu ContentView attal/ 'because of having taken'
No change in the alveolar lateral was found in the final position.

4.2.3.1.5. Minimal pairs

4.2.3.1.5.1. Medial position

27.64% of informants could not read the material which included alveolar lateral in the medial position.

4.2.3.1.5.1.1. Maintenance

53.25% of informants have pronounced the alveolar lateral sound correctly. All the words given in the minimal pairs list have been pronounced correctly by some informants while they have been changed into some other sound by some other informants. Since all the words given in the list were maintained the examples are not given.

4.2.3.1.5.1.1. Change

The alveolar lateral sound has changed into retroflex lateral in the speech of 22.35% informants.

4.2.3.1.5.2. Final position

27.95% of informants could not read the words in such a way as to maintain the alveolar lateral in the final position.

4.2.3.1.5.2.1. Maintenance

59.95% of informants have correctly pronounced the alveolar lateral.
4.2.3.1.5.2.2. Change

The alveolar lateral has changed into retroflex lateral in the speech of 22.04% informants and as retroflex continuant lateral in the speech of 1.08% informants in the word final position.

4.2.3.2. Retroflex lateral
4.2.3.2.1. Casual speech
4.2.3.2.1.1. Medial position
4.2.3.2.1.1.1. Maintenance

It was found that 81.30% of informants have maintained the retroflex lateral in the medial position.

/suluva/ 'easily'

4.2.3.2.1.1.2. Change

The retroflex lateral has changed into alveolar lateral in the speech of 18.69% informants.

/pallam/ ----> /pallam/ 'pit'  (\l\rightarrow 11)

4.2.3.2.1.2. Final position
4.2.3.2.1.2.1. Maintenance

/\l/ has been maintained in the final position in the speech of 80.48% informants.

/kal/ 'toddy'

/mancal/ 'turmeric'
4.2.3.2.1.2.2. Change

19.5% of informants have changed the retroflex lateral into the alveolar lateral in the word final position.

/kal/ -----》 /kal/
'toddy' (1—>1)
/mañcal/ -----》 /mañcal/
'turmeric' (1—>1)

4.2.3.2.2. Careful speech

4.2.3.2.2.1. Medial position

4.2.3.2.2.1.1. Maintenance

In the careful speech, 84.14% of informants have maintained the retroflex lateral medially.

/vilakku/ 'lamp'

/veḷḷai/ 'white colour'

4.2.3.2.2.1.2. Change

In producing the medial /l/ 15.85% of informants have changed the retroflex lateral into alveolar lateral.

/velakku/ -----》 /velakku/
'lamp' (1—>1)

4.2.3.2.2.2. Final position

4.2.3.2.2.2.1. Maintenance

The retroflex lateral was maintained in the word final position in the speech of 80.55% informants.
4.2.3.2.2.2. Change

16.59% of informants have changed the retroflex lateral into alveolar lateral in the careful speech.

/ταλππαλ/ ----> /ταλππαλ/
'latch' (1--->1)

/ταβαλ/ ----> /ταβαλ/
'frog' (1--->1)

/kιλι/ ----> /kιλι/
'parrot' (1--->1)

11.76% of informants could not explain the pictures which were intended to check the word final retroflex lateral.

4.2.3.2.3. Word list

4.2.3.2.3.1. Medial position

4.2.3.2.3.1.1. Maintenance

The words list performance shows 56.91% of maintenance regarding the retroflex lateral medially.

/kαλαμ/ 'field'

/ναλαιγιαλ/ 'bangle'
4.2.3.2.3.1.2. Change

In the words list test conducted, the retroflex lateral has undergone two types of changes. In one case it has become alveolar lateral and in another it has become retroflex continuant lateral. 1.38% of informants have changed the retroflex lateral into alveolar lateral and 2.84% of informants have changed into retroflex continuant lateral.

/kaləm/ ---> /kalam/
'field' (1-->1)

/valaiyal/ ---> /valaiyal/
'bangle' (1-->1)

28.04% of informants have failed to read the list of words given for testing the maintenance of medial /l/ sound in the reading context.

4.2.3.2.3.2. Final position

26.55% of informants were unable to read the words given to test their ability to maintain the retroflex lateral in the word final position.

4.2.3.2.3.2.1. Maintenance

With regard to the occurrence of word final retroflex lateral, 63.68% of informants have maintained it in their pronunciation.
4.2.3.2.3.2.2. Change

In the word final position also, the retroflex lateral was pronounced as alveolar lateral in the speech of 5.95% informants and in the speech of 3.78% informants it was pronounced as retroflex continuant lateral.

4.2.3.2.4. Passage reading

4.2.3.2.4.1. Medial position

26.01% of informants were unable to read the passage given for reading with the correct pronunciation of retroflex lateral in the medial position of the word.

4.2.3.2.4.1.1. Maintenance

In passage reading, 64.22% of informants have correctly pronounced the retroflex lateral medially. The word that was pronounced correctly is the following

/ilaikalukku/ 'for the leaves'

4.2.3.2.4.1.2. Change

The retroflex lateral of the above word has changed into alveolar lateral in the speech of 9.75% informants.
4.2.3.2.4.2. Final position

26.82% of informants were not able to read the passage given for them so as to test the maintenance of retroflex lateral in the final position.

4.2.3.2.4.2.1. Maintenance

The retroflex lateral sound has been maintained by 66.66% of informants in the context of passage reading.

/palankalai/ 'fruits'
/talaikal/ 'leaves'
/talli/ 'having moved'

4.2.3.2.4.2.2. Change

In passage reading, the retroflex lateral has changed into alveolar lateral in the speech of 4.87% informants out of the 123 informants.

/talaikal/ -----> /talaikal/ (l-->l)
/talli/ -----> /talli/ (l1-->l1)
4.2.3.2.4. Minimal pairs

4.2.3.2.5.1. Medial position

Of the 123 informants 28.86% of informants were not able to read the pairs of words given to check maintenance of the retroflex lateral medially.

4.2.3.2.5.1.1. Maintenance

49.18% of informants have maintained the retroflex lateral in reading the minimal pairs correctly. Since all the words have maintained and changed the retroflex lateral sound, the examples are not given.

4.2.3.2.5.1.2. Change

The retroflex lateral has been changed into alveolar lateral in the word medial position by 14.04% of informants.

4.2.3.2.5.2. Final position

28.99% of informants were not able to read the material given to test their ability of distinguishing between the alveolar and retroflex lateral.

4.2.3.2.5.2.1. Maintenance

In reading the minimal pairs, 57.70% of informants have maintained the quality of the retroflex lateral sound in the final position.
4.2.3.2.5.2.2. Change

In the word final position, the retroflex lateral has been changed into alveolar lateral by 13.31% of informants and into retroflex continuant lateral by 0.26% of informants.

4.2.3.3. Retroflex continuant lateral

4.2.3.3.1. Casual speech

4.2.3.3.1.1. Medial position

4.2.3.3.1.1.1. Maintenance

8.73% of informants only have pronounced the retroflex continuant lateral sound correctly.

/mulam/ 'hand measurement'
/palam/ 'fruit'

4.2.3.3.1.1.2. Change

In the case of retroflex continuant lateral, it has been pronounced as alveolar lateral by 16.26% of informants and as retroflex lateral by 75.60% of informants.

/val¨iyaa/ -----> /valiyaa/
'way' (1--->1)
/valiyaa/
(1-->1)
/molam/ -----> /molam/
'measurement' (1-->1)
4.2.3.3.1.2. Final position

4.2.3.3.1.2.1. Maintenance

11.38% of informants have produced the retroflex continuant lateral correctly that occurred in the word final position.

/pali/ 'blame'

4.2.3.3.1.2.2. Change

In the speech of 13% of informants, the retroflex continuant lateral has changed into alveolar lateral while 74.79% of informants have changed the same into the retroflex lateral.

/pali/ 'blame'
4.2.3.3.2. Careful speech

4.2.3.3.2.1. Medial position

In the careful speech behaviour, 14.66% of informants were not able to recognize and describe the pictures exactly.

4.2.3.3.2.1.1. Maintenance

10.56% of informants were found to maintain the retroflex continuant lateral correctly in the word medial position.

/maampalam/ 'mango'
/taalppaal/ 'latch'

4.2.3.3.2.1.2. Change

The retroflex continuant lateral has changed into alveolar lateral in the speech of 8.13% informants and into retroflex lateral in the speech of 54.06% of informants.

/maampalam/ ----> /maampalam/ 'mango' (₁→₁)

/maampalam/ (₁→₁)

4.2.3.3.2.1.3. Deletion

In the careful speech behaviour, one of the pictures /taalppaal/ 'latch' given for description exhibits the phenomenon of the deletion of retroflex continuant lateral as,
This deletion has been found among 21.13% of informants.

4.2.3.3.2.2. Final position

1.62% of informants were unable to describe the pictures that were intended to bring out the pronunciation of the retroflex continuant lateral in the word final position.

4.2.3.3.2.2.1. Maintenance

In the context of careful speech style the retroflex continuant lateral in the word final position was maintained by 10.97% of informants.

/kooli/ 'hen'

4.2.3.3.2.2.2. Change

Among the 123 informants, 7.52% of informants have pronounced the retroflex continuant lateral as alveolar lateral and 66.46% of informants as retroflex lateral sound.

/malai/ -----> /malai/  
'rain'  
   (l---->1) 
/malai/  
   (l---->l)
4.2.3.3.3. Word list

4.2.3.3.3.1. Medial position

29.67% of informants could not read the list of words given with due maintenance of word medial retroflex continuant lateral.

4.2.3.3.3.1.1. Maintenance

The retroflex lateral was maintained in the word medial position correctly by 10.83% of informants.

\[ /\text{mulam/} / \rightarrow /\text{mulam/} / \text{hand measurement} / \]

\[ /\text{vaalaippalam/} / \rightarrow /\text{vaalaippalam/} / \text{banana} / \]

\[ /\text{taalppaal/} / \rightarrow /\text{taalppaal/} / \text{latch} / \]

4.2.3.3.3.1.2. Change

The informants, who failed to maintain the retroflex continuant lateral, have changed it into alveolar lateral and to retroflex lateral. 7.72% of informants were found shifting to alveolar lateral while 51.75% of informants to retroflex lateral.

\[ /\text{mulam/} / \rightarrow /\text{mulam/} / \text{hand measurement} / \]

\[ /\text{mulam/} / \rightarrow /\text{mulam/} / \text{hand measurement} / \]
4.2.3.3.2. Final position

28.45% of informants could not read the words given that included the retroflex continuant lateral in the medial position.

4.2.3.3.2.1. Maintenance

10.56% of informants have exactly pronounced the retroflex continuant lateral sound in the final position.

/kooli/  'hen'
/tamil/  'Tamil language'

4.2.3.3.2.2. Change

11.78% of informants have changed the retroflex continuant lateral into alveolar lateral and 49.18% of informants to retroflex lateral sound.

/kooli/  'hen'  (/l-->l)

4.2.3.3.4. Passage reading

4.2.3.3.4.1. Medial position

28.45% of informants were not able to read the passage given to check the maintenance of the retroflex continuant lateral in the word medial position.

4.2.3.3.4.1.1. Maintenance

The quality of retroflex continuant lateral was maintained by 19.51% of informants. The words that carried the same sound medially are

/palaṅkaḷai/ 'fruits'
/talaikaḷ/ 'leaves'

4.2.3.3.4.1.2. Change

The /l/ was changed into alveolar lateral in the speech of 8.66% of informants and into retroflex lateral in the speech of 44.10% of informants out of 123 informants totally.

/palaṅkaḷai/ -----> /palaṅkaḷai/
'fruits'

(ʟ---->l)

/palaṅkaḷai/ (ʟ---->l)
4.2.3.3.4.2. Final position

30.48% of informants could not read the passage given that included the /l/ in the word final position.

4.2.3.3.4.2.1. Maintenance

15.70% of informants have pronounced the /l/ accurately while reading the passage. Only one word included the retroflex continuant lateral in the word final position. /kooli/ 'hen'

4.2.3.3.4.2.2. Change

/l/ has been changed into alveolar lateral by 8.94% of informants and into retroflex by 44.71% of informants.

4.2.3.3.5. Minimal pairs

4.2.3.3.5.1. Medial position

29.26% of informants were unable to read the words given as minimal pairs that included /l/ in the medial position.
/l/ was maintained in the speech of 13.65% informants. It has been changed into alveolar lateral by 22.92% of informants and into retroflex lateral by 35.77% of informants.

4.2.3.3.5.2. Final position

The analysis shows that 29.67% of informants were not able to read the minimal pairs which were intended to test the /l/ in the word final position.

The retroflex continuant lateral was pronounced correctly in the speech of 13.65% of informants.

18.35% of informants have changed the retroflex continuant lateral into alveolar lateral and 37.66% of informants have changed to the retroflex lateral.

The maintenance and change of laterals, so far discussed are clearly illustrated in Table No.4.1.

As far the alveolar lateral is concerned,

1. Casual speech context shows a high percentage of maintenance in the medial position and comparatively the change was found more in the context of reading minimal pairs.

2. In the final position also the same result has been found.
Table No.4.1. THE ANALYSIS OF THE LATERALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Lat-</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Medial</th>
<th>Final</th>
<th>Total References</th>
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<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Change</td>
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<td>-</td>
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F.N. 1. Casual speech
2. Careful speech
3. Words list
4. Passage reading
5. Minimal pairs
The retroflex lateral shows,

1. A better maintenance in the careful speech context and a high percentage of change in the casual speech context was found in the case of word medial sound.
2. The same result has been found in the word final position also.

As far the retroflex continuant lateral is concerned,

1. While reading the passage more number of informants were able to produce the sound correctly in the medial position, and in the casual speech context the percentage of change is high.
2. In contrast, in the context of reading the minimal pairs, /l/ has showed a better maintenance and in the casual speech context the percentage of change is high.

4.2.4. Nasalization

Analysis of the data collected to study the nasalization of vowels in the word final syllable was carried out and, it was identified that nasalization occurs in the following two contexts only.

1. Casual speech context
2. Careful speech context

Nasalization was not attested in the other three contexts.
4.2.4.1. Casual speech style

Nasalization phenomenon was attested in the speech of 88.61% informants, while it was absent among 11.38% of informants. This means that most of the Tamil speaking community tends to nasalize the vowel when it occurs in the word final position.

/kulipp[e ê]/ 'will bathe-I'
/elutuv[e ê]/ 'will write-I'
/varuv[e ê]/ 'will come-I'

4.2.4.2. Careful speech style

In the careful speech behaviour, where the selection of words was limited, nasalization was found in the speech of 63.90% informants and in the speech of 32.27% informants the maintenance of pure vowels without nasalization was found. A small number of informants, 3.82 in percentage, could not describe the pictures clearly and selected some other words which did not include nasals at the word final position.

/kaṭikaar[ō]/ 'clock'
/paṇ[ō]/ 'money'
/kot[ō]/ 'vessel'
/suṭr[aā]/ 'shoots-he'
/pooṭr[aā]/ 'wears-he'
/sonn[ê]/ 'told-I'
/paṭ[ā]/ 'will hit-it'

The above words were pronounced without nasalization also.
4.2.5. Voice

4.2.5.1. Initial voice

The plosives at the word initial position were pronounced both with voice and without voice.

4.2.5.1.1. Casual speech

Voicing of the initial plosives was attested in the speech of 66.99% informants while it was absent among 31.05% of informants, which means that most of the informants tend to use the voiced plosives when they occur in the word initial position.

/\[p\]aŋtu/
/\[b\]aŋtu/ 'ball'
/\[p\]aakkiya laccumi/
/\[b\]aakkiyam/ 'personal names'
/\[t\]aati/ 'beard'
/\[d\]aati/ 'big'
/\[t\]āntam/
/\[d\]āntam/ 'tusk'
/\[s\]aati/
/\[j\]aati/ 'caste'

4.2.5.1.2. Careful speech

In the careful speech style, the voiced plosives were found initially in the speech of 57.72% informants, and voiceless plosives were found in the speech of 36.12% informants.
Among the pictures given for description, one picture showing the construction of a building with bricks' intended to bring out the world /cenkal/ 'brick' elicited two ways of pronunciation. This word was pronounced as /[c]enkal/ by 21.95% of informants and as /[s]enkal/ by 78.04% of informants.

4.2.5.1.3. Word list

With reference to the style of reading the words in isolation 21.78% of informants were unable to read the list. Among the rest of the informants, 28.61% of informants have used voiced plosives initially and 48.13% of informants have used voiceless plosives.
4.2.5.1.4. Passage reading

20.32% of informants were not able to read the passage given. Voiced plosives were identified in the speech of 24.79% informants and voiceless plosives were identified in the speech of 53.25% informants.

4.2.5.2. Intervocalic voice

The intervocalic velar plosive was found as voiceless velar fricative and also as voiced velar plosive. In the casual speech behaviour, 4.06% of informants were not included for the observation since they have changed the velar plosive into other consonants in the words like

/makan/ ----> /mavā/ (k-->v)
This type of situation was found purely in the casual speech context only.

4.2.5.2.1. Casual speech

In the casual speech, voiceless velar fricative was used by 84.46% of informants and the voiced velar plosive was used by 49.75% of informants.

4.2.5.2.2. Careful speech

14.06% of informants could not explain the pictures given to them. Among the rest of the informants, 46.09% of informants have fricativized the velar plosive, and 39.83% of informants have pronounced as voiced velar plosive.
4.2.5.2.3. Word list

18.69% of informants could not read the words given. The voiceless velar fricative was used by 43% of informants and the voiced velar plosive was used by 34.7% of informants.

/na[x]ai/     'jewel'
/na[g]ai/     'nail'
/ma[x]an/     'son'
/pa[x]al/     'day time'
/pa[g]al/     'star'
/a[x]al/      'lamp'
/na[x]am/     'nail'
/na[g]am/     'nail'
/ma[x]am/     'star'
/ma[g]am/     'star'
/a[x]al/      'lamp'
/na[x]am/     'nail'
/na[g]am/     'nail'
/pa[x]u/      'boat'
/pa[g]u/      'boat'
/ma[x]am/     'son'
/ma[g]am/     'lamp'
/na[x]am/     'nail'
/na[g]am/     'star'
/kantaa miru[x]am/ 'rhinoceros'
/kantaa miru[g]am/ 'rhinoceros'
/na[x]am/     'nail'
/na[g]am/     'nail'
/pata[x]u/     'boat'
/pata[g]u/     'boat'
4.2.5.2.4. Passage reading

23.08% of informants were not able to read the passage. The voiceless velar fricative was found in the speech of 50.2 (40.81%) informants and the voiced velar plosive was found in the speech of 44 (35.77%) informants.

/paṭa[x]il/
/paṭa[y]il/ 'in the boat'
/na[x]ai/
/na[y]ai/ 'jewel'
/maṭa[x]il/
/maṭa[y]il/ 'in the sluice'
/pa[x]alil/
/pa[y]alil/ 'in the day time'

Table No.4.2. AN ANALYSIS OF VOICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>INITIAL</th>
<th>VOICED</th>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F.N. 1. Casual speech
2. Careful speech
3. Words list
4. Passage reading.
4.2.5.3. Voice of the plosive after nasal position

In this context, the plosive was correctly pronounced except in few cases. The after nasal plosive was pronounced as voiceless in the speech of 17.07% informants only. This phenomenon was found especially in the reading style and by 2.43% of informants in the casual context. Other types of variations could not be found.

Table No.4.2. showing the use of voice, clearly indicates that in the initial voice,

1. a high percentage of voiced plosive users in the casual speech context has been attested
2. users of voiceless plosive are more in the style of passage reading

Regarding the intervocalic voice,

1. The voiced velar plosive and the voiceless velar fricative, both have scored a high percentage in the casual speech context.

The sociolinguistic correlation of the variables identified is given in the following chapter.