INTRODUCTION

Many areas in the world are characterized by complexity in communication resulting from language contact. The present work focuses attention on one such area of communication complexity from the linguistic point of view. The material for the study is the speech of a Tamil speaking community who are reported to have migrated to the southern parts of Kerala from Tamil Nadu.

0.1 AIMS

The chief aims of the present study include the following:

To investigate the linguistic mechanisms and results of interference caused in the Tamil language when a group of its speakers comes into contact with speakers of Malayalam.

To contribute to the knowledge of processes by which a language changes under the influence of contact with another language.

To provide a bilingual grammar which has Tamil and Malayalam as underlying systems.

To provide a contrastive analysis of these cognate languages and thereby to help to trace their history.
0.2 BILINGUALISM

The concept of bilingualism has become broader and broader since the beginning of the century. It was long regarded as the equal mastery of two languages. Bloomfield considered bilingualism as "the native-like control of two languages". This was later broadened by Einar Haugen so as to include the ability to produce "complete meaningful utterances in the other languages." Again it was suggested that the concept be further extended to include simply "passive knowledge" of the written language or any "contact with possible models in a second language and the ability to use these in the environment of the native language." This broadening of the concept is due to the realization that the point at which a speaker of a second language becomes bilingual is

1. Bloomfield. 1933. P.56
difficult to determine. However, the concept may be further broadened and defined as the ability to use some elements from the second language consciously or unconsciously.

When two languages are in contact, there will arise many problems that are of special interest to the student of linguistics. One of the obvious effects of language contact is the phenomenon of interference. We have to distinguish interference from borrowing. The former is a feature of 'parole' and the latter of 'langue'. Weinreich who has mentioned two phases of interference states that "In speech, interference is like sand carried by the stream; in language it is the sedimented sand deposited in the bottom of the lake."\(^4\) He referred interference to "those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more

than one language." "The term interference implies
the rearrangement of patterns that result from the
introduction of foreign elements into the more
highly structured domains of language."\(^5\).

Interference is individual and accidental
whereas borrowing is collective and systematic. The
study of linguistic borrowing is a part of historical
linguistics, but at the moment of borrowing, there is
a linguistic state namely the coexistence of
different linguistic structures with the same
speaker. The interferences which result in borrowing
are evidence of inter-linguistic identification made
by the speakers.

A bilingual description is more than two
monolingual descriptions laid side by side. The aim
of the bilingual description is to predict the
interferences by describing the identifications that
can be expected. The present dissertation comprises

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5. Weinreich 1963 P.1
three descriptions in all, namely descriptions of
the monolingual Tamil system, the bilingual system
and the Malayalam monolingual system. An attempt
has been made to show the identification process
of the features by the bilingualism the phonological
and morphological levels.

The present study springs primarily from
linguistic interest and no cultural or anthropological
points of view have been explained. Only certain
areas which appeared to provide scope for fruitful
comparison have been brought into the discussion.
Thus for instance analysis of suprasegmental features
which seemed to have little or no differences among
the three systems taken up for the study has not
been presented in this thesis. Contrastive statement
of morphophonemics and clitics has also not been
attempted.
0.3 MATERIAL FOR THE STUDY

The material taken up for the present study is the speech of the Nadar community who are settled in the southern parts of Kerala. It is found that members of the community in the area under study speak Tamil with a high degree of interference due to the contact of Malayalam. The mixed language is taken as the language of the bilingual community.

A questionnaire consisting of a word list containing 1500 items and a sentence list containing 1000 entries was administered. In addition to this questionnaire, conversations and narrations were also recorded. The informants selected were in the age group of 25 and 50 years.

0.3.1 THE NADAR COMMUNITY

According to the Travancore state Manual edited by Nagamiah (Vol.II.P.392-398), the Nadars...
of Travancore (Kerala) are migrated from or via the Tinnevelly district of Tamil Nadu. The documents available with some ancient families show that it was in response to the invitations by the then rulers of the Travancore state that the Nadars came to this part of the country.

The exact date of migration has not been mentioned anywhere. The migration might have taken place around the beginning of 19th century A.D.

The Nadars claim that they are the descendants of the Pandias who were the rulers of Pandia kingdom. They believe that Nadars had been the possessors of the southern districts and the kings of Tamil Nadu. After a continuous reign of about 4000 years, they were defeated by the Telugu Naiks in the 16th century. With this defeat their social status was completely shattered and they had to forgo all their privileges, rights, titles
and properties. They were labelled as untouchables and were forced to leave the city of Madurai, and were scattered across the southern districts of Tamil Nadu and they became wanderers. It was at that time they resorted to palmyrah climbing for toddy tapping as a profession.

It may also be noted that the claim that they were once kings is based on the possible etymology of the title Nadu, namely naat‐aan: country‐masculine singular: one who owns or rules the country.

0.4 ABOUT THE LANGUAGES IN CONTACT.

Tamil and Malayalam are Dravidian languages, linked by a common origin, geographical proximity and close historico-cultural relationship. Geographically, Tamil has the widest distribution among the Dravidian languages. Besides India where it is spoken by about thirty seven million people, Tamil has spread in Ceylon, Burma, Malaysia,
MAP OF THE SOUTHERN PART OF KERALA
SHOWING
THE BILINGUAL AREA
THE BILINGUAL AREA

OTTASEKHARAMANGALAM

MALAPPURAM

MAMPUZHAKKARA

VEHARA

PALUKAL

PANICHAMOODU

UCHAKKADA

POZHIYOR

INCHIVILA

PARASSALA

KOLLANKODU

KALIKKAVILA
Indo-China and Indonesia. The Tamil language has preserved a good many old roots and words of primitive Dravidian. Of all the cognate languages Tamil has the most ancient literature. The oldest literary documents go back approximately to the second or third century A.D.

Malayalam is the mother tongue of about twenty-one million people and its spread is more or less confined to India. The earliest Malayalam writings go back to the 12th century and in the 15th century it was established as an independent literary language. Of all the Dravidian languages it is perhaps Malayalam which has been influenced to the greatest extent by Sanskrit both in respect of linguistic structure and literary tendencies.

The Census report of 1971 provides the following figures of speakers of Tamil and Malayalam in India, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
0.5 BILINGUAL DATA

The data for the bilingual system have been collected from twentyone informants belonging to the Nadar community of the bilingual belt, who were selected at random. This area lies in the extreme south of Kerala. The following twelve points were selected for data collection:

Kollankode
Pozhiyoor
Uchakkadu
Kalikkavila
Parassala
Inchivila
Palukal
Mamipuzhakkara
Vellara da
Panichamoodu
Ottasekharamangalam
Anappara

The tape recorded material was checked with the forms provided by a number of other informants of the area and additional or alternate forms provided by them have also been accommodated.

0.6 TAMIL MONOLINGUAL DATA

The data for the Tamil monolingual system have been collected from Osaravilai, a place in the Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu which is about 45 kilometres south of the bilingual belt. For this system also only persons belonging to Nadar community were selected as informants. The people of this village have least contact with the Malayalam speaking people.

0.7 MALAYALAM MONOLINGUAL DATA

The data for the Malayalam monolingual system have been collected from Thirumala, a place
45 kilometres north of the bilingual belt. The people of this area have no direct contact with the Tamil speaking people. The informants selected for this system belong to communities other than the Nadar community.

0.8 SYNOPSIS OF THE THESIS

The present work contains four chapters and four appendices.

The first chapter is intended to provide descriptions of the phonemics of the Bilingual system, the Tamil Monolingual system and the Malayalam Monolingual system one after another. The phonemic inventory is followed in each sections by phonemic and allophonic distributions, statement of patterns of consonant clusters, discussions of the structure of syllables and nature of syllable prominence.

Morphophonemic rules applicable to each of the three systems are formulated and illustrated in the second chapter. The morphophonemic symbols
employed in sections on Morphology have also been explained.

Morphology of the three systems taken up for analysis is the subject matter of the third chapter. Morphology of each system is discussed under the titles Verb, Appellatives, Noun and Clitic. Suffixes of Verb, appellatives and noun are described one after the other keeping the order of each item in the respective position class. Verb stems have been classified on the bases of markers of past tense and verbal noun, while the classification of noun stems is based on the stem alternations involved. Clitics are classified as free and bound depending on their freedom of occurrence, the latter being subdivided again on the basis of distribution.

Chapter four provides contrastive statements about the three systems taking into consideration the phonetic, phonemic, allomorphic and morphemic levels. An attempt has been made to show whether a feature of
the Bilingual system belongs to the Primary language (Tamil) or it is adopted from the secondary language (Malayalam).

The conclusion drawn from the present study of the language of the bilingual community in comparison with Tamil and Malayalam languages has also been given in this chapter.

A selected bibliography follows this chapter.

Appendix I is a list of vocabulary items commonly occurring in the three systems under discussion. The first column provides the translation meaning in English applicable to the item in question whereas columns 2, 3 and 4 give vocabulary items available in the Bilingual system, Tamil Monolingual system and the Malayalam Monolingual system. Alternate items occurring in the same system are listed one below the other.
Sample of parallel forms of unconnected utterances occurring in the three systems are given in appendix II, under the title of meaning in English in each case.

The subject matter of appendix III comprises, instances of short conversation between two typical native speakers employing the bilingual system.

Instances of sample text of bilingual speech illustrating characteristics of continuous speech are provided in appendix IV, together with general meaning in English below each set of sentences.