4.1 Preliminaries

This chapter is devoted to the sociolinguistic analysis of autobiographies written by Indian Dalit writers. It focuses on the use of linguistic strategies used by Indian Dalit writers. The autobiographies under study are *The Outcaste* by Sharankumar Limbale, *The Branded* by Laxman Gaikwad and *The Prisons We Broke* by Baby Kamble. The Indian Dalit autobiographers set their autobiographies in the rural parts of India. Factors influencing the characters’ speech like social class membership, caste and gender are taken into account while discussing the sociolinguistic features of the character’s linguistic behaviour. The other aspects such as address terms and greetings, blessings and curses, abusive terms, honorific terms and kinship terms, power and solidarity have been taken into account while making the sociolinguistic analysis. The language used by the major as well as the minor characters is evaluated using the principles of Sociolinguistics. The researcher has analyzed Indian Dalit writers’ use of social dialects in three autobiographies with reference to the characters because they represent different social and economic classes. Linguistic peculiarities of these characters are examined thoroughly. Therefore, studying the characters from the perspective of Sociolinguistics gives authenticity to the characters and thus, enriches the work of art.

Whichever approach we adopt to the study of characters’ language: whether we consider it as the conscious attempt to create the nuances of speech or as merely the use of established literary conventions, there are a number of formal and sociolinguistic factors which affect the creation, use and perception of non-standard varieties of English in literature. These factors must be accounted for by any approach to the study of literary dialect.
4.2 Factors Influencing the Characters’ Language

Throughout this chapter, an attempt is made to explore specific conversational pieces from the selected autobiographies and analyse them on sociolinguistic level. The factors that influence the characters’ use of language are studied in this chapter. It is observed that Indian Dalit writers presented a new world and a new society through their autobiographies. As the refined or standard language is inapt to express the intensity of feelings of characters, Dalit writers preferred their own dialects. That is why, we can see the usage of diversified colloquial language in Dalit literature in general and Dalit autobiographies in particular. One comes across the fact in the autobiographies under consideration. The characters present the socio-cultural realities of the Dalit life with such a language.

Indian Dalit Autobiography, as a diverse and complex literary genre, is an attempt to understand its multiple meanings expressed and mediated through different identities such as caste, class, ethnicity, religion, language and gender. The language used by Dalit writers is different from the so-called established writers. It is the language of Dalits, which is considered as foul and vulgar language. It is the language used by Dalits in their day-to-day life. This language does not have sophisticated words and grammar. In their autobiographies, Dalit writers have used the language of the untouchable quarters (Maharwada) with their own vocabulary, grammar and syntax.

4.2.1 Social Class/Caste Factor

It is a difficult task to draw a line between the class principle and the caste principle. Class and caste are two principles of stratification, which has persisted, in Indian social system in a dialectical relationship. Karl Marx first explained class as a sociological concept. Marxian approach to the study of class only refers to economic structure. It is very important to perceive social and cultural aspects to give a detailed picture of class structure. In India aspects like wealth, power, caste, occupation and education determine an individual’s class position and hence there are not two but several classes present in Indian society. This social division in India led to a divergence in speech at the level of dialect and accent.
The most special and peculiar feature of Indian society is caste. There are thousands of castes and caste-like groups in India. These are hierarchically ordered and named groups into which members are born. Caste is one of the social variables responsible for the variation of language. Caste system is an important feature of social system in India. The belief of purity and pollution is attached with caste. Generally, people of high status are associated with purity and people of low status with pollution. Earlier the low caste and the high caste people did not live together. It is still prevalent in many villages till date. In the Hindu caste hierarchy, the Brahmins are considered the upper caste. They are priestly and learned class, so their language contains more Sanskritized words. Then are the Kshatriyas, the warriors and rulers, so terminologies regarding war are more in them. After them comes the Vaisyas, the farmers and merchants. Then the Sudras, Peasants and laborers and at the lower end comes the Untouchables, now known as Scheduled Caste.

Many scholars have studied language based on caste variation. A very eminent work has been done by Gumperz (1958) on a North Indian village named Khalapur located in Saharanpur District of Uttar Pradesh. He divided the inhabitants into thirty-one endogamous caste or jatis. He found differences in the village of three types- differences in phonemic distribution, etymological differences and phonetic differences.

William Bright (1990) has discussed the linguistic variations found between two Kannada dialects of Bangalore District on the basis of caste. One spoken by a young Brahmin woman born and raised in the city of Bangalore and the other of agricultural Okkaliga community. The differences were there at the level of phonology, grammar, lexicon etc. Also Tulu, another Dravidian language of South India is spoken totally different by a Brahmin and a Non-Brahmin or Shudras.

In modern times, the caste system in India acquired some new features. There are many vagaries found in our caste system. One of the commonest forms of discrimination that is fastly growing in India is the practice of tagging caste or clan suffixes to names like Sharma, Verma, Nair, Iyer, etc.
Language is inseparable from culture. It does not carry and express just the meanings but carries certain cultural codes and signs, which give a special significance and uniqueness to a work of art. This uniqueness poses a great challenge to translators. To decode those codes and signs and to cover them is a challenge for a translator, especially when the original work is written in a particular dialect. Translating such texts becomes a double challenge for translators for they have to transpose the readers to a particular region by capturing the nuances of the dialect and its cultural associations. In Dalit autobiographical texts, language has its own politics and a significant role in representing the cultural specificity of the community as well as the region.

Dalit Autobiographies are originally written in Marathi language. Marathi is an Indo-Aryan language spoken by the people of Maharashtra and western and central India. Marathi is written in Devanagari script similar to the National Language of India i.e. Hindi. The Devanagari script is the script used for writing Sanskrit from which these languages are been derived. Marathi has the fourth largest number of native speakers in India. Marathi is spoken in Maharashtra state, which covers a vast geographical area, which consists of 34 different districts. The Major dialects of Marathi are called Standard Marathi and Warhadi Marathi. The other few sub-dialects are like Ahirani, Dangi, Vadvali, Samavedi, Khandeshi and Malwani. However, Standard Marathi is the official language of state of Maharashtra. Standard ‘Marathi’ language is based on dialects used by academics and the print media. The Indic scholars distinguishes 42 Dialects of spoken Marathi bordering other major language areas have many properties in common with those languages, further differentiating them from standard spoken ‘Marathi’ language.

Dalit autobiographies have become canonical texts in the history of Indian Dalit writings. They are especially known for their language, their narration of events and for their brilliant use of certain caste codes and signs with an aim to revealing the deep-rooted caste system in Indian society.

Indian Dalit writers have used their dialect in their autobiographies. This is generally called as a ‘Dalit style of language’ which aims at subverting the given decorum and aesthetics of upper-class. Since caste has its material and geographical existence in
India, use of this dialect has become a tool of strengthening the content of the texts. It also helps the readers to situate the issues in the culture proper and get the region specificity. Inability to capture the dialectical variation may not be as serious an issue compared to the failure to catch such cultural codes, especially in the context of Dalit Literature. One who reads original Dalit autobiographies can obviously feel the rhythm and the implied caste-cultural markers of the narratives. But by completing the broken sentences of the dialect, translators seem to have missed something in the English translation.

The Dalit autobiographies are located against a socio-cultural background. Most Dalit writers’ focus is on discrimination in society based on class and caste. They universalized everyday class and caste exploitations of the Dalits through the characters in their autobiographies. They highlight the harsh reality of the suppression, struggle and torture Dalits face every day of their miserable lives.

The following pieces of conversations from the selected Dalit autobiographies throw light on the influence on the language of the characters caused by the social class/caste factors.

A) The Branded

This autobiography is a social document which reveals the lives of the people from the branded community i.e. Uchalya. The characters depicted in this autobiography come from the segregated tribe and face discrimination due to their low social status. The people in power always look down upon them and harass them for petty things. The helpless people from the tribe have no voice to articulate their genuine feelings. Let us study the following extract carefully:

- ‘Tell us where you’ve hidden the stolen money and gold. Show or we’ll smash your bones.’

  Grandfather wailed piteously: ‘See Saab, see for yourself, there is nothing in the hut.’

  ‘Your whore will know,’ cried the police. (p.2)
The above conversation is between Laxman Gaikwad’s drunken grandfather Lingappa Gaikwad and the Police. Grandfather Lingappa and Police belong to different social classes. Professionally they have got different social status in Indian society. Lingappa Gaikwad’s name is recorded by the Nizam State records as a ‘most notorious and dangerous thief’ and the Police is a guardian. The linguistic utterances such as ‘Tell us where you’ve hidden the stolen money and gold. Show or we’ll smash your bones.’ and ‘Your whore will know,’ show that the police has got the authority to talk with the people the way he wants. He not only arrogantly threatens and overpowers the Grandfather but also abuses his wife as whore. On the other hand, Grandpa shows his respect by calling the Police ‘Saab’. The hierarchy of degree of politeness in different forms of sentence constructions is made very clear in above conversation. Let us examine another instance:

“We should live like other village people. The village people do not allow us to take water from wells. They give us water from a distance without touching us. They do not allow us to visit temples.” (p.21)

The above linguistic expressions throw light on how social customs and traditions influence the utterances of Martand. Laxman’s father, Martand, works as security guard at Chamle’s farm. Living in Chamle’s home as a servant, he often gives a few words of wise advice. His expression shows how the caste system is deeply rooted in Indian society. Dalits were not allowed to draw water from the common well; they were prohibited from entering temples. They face stigmatization with regard to the concept of purity and pollution. Martand advises to live like high caste people. He means Dalits should live with dignity. The conversation between Laxman and his teacher is worth studying:

“Stand up those who have not taken a bath or is not wearing, washed clothes.’
I alone used to stand up. The teacher beat me. Sometimes to avoid beatings at the hands of the teacher, I used to wet only the kargota and show it to the
teacher saying, ‘Look Guruji, I’ve taken a bath today, my kargota is wet.”

(p.33)

When Laxman goes to school, the teacher beats him for not taking a bath and wearing unwashed clothes. Dirty clothes, unclean and untidy looks have been traditionally associated with Laxman’s caste. This incident is aggravated by orthodox and prejudiced attitude of the teacher. His over-bearing approach makes Laxman conscious about the caste and inferiority. Moreover, one has to examine closely the reaction of the Dalit student in a classroom. Laxman lies to avoid beatings at the hands of his teacher. The above conversation throws light on the relationship between an upper caste teacher and a Dalit student. There is another incident in which a caste Hindu humiliates a person from the low caste:

“Nagu Bembade retorted arrogantly: ‘Is it your father’s bullock-cart? We can’t take him.’ Anna said, ‘We beg of you. We touch your feet. Please save our brother. Take him with you in the cart, we’ll walk along with the cart.’ But Bembade refused to take Bhau in the cart.” (p.86)

Nagu Bembade, a minor character, is an upper-caste villager. His linguistic units ‘Is it your father’s bullock-cart?’ is an expression of arrogance. The hatred of upper-caste people towards the Dalits finds expression in this remark. On the contrary, Anna’s linguistic expressions such as ‘We beg of you. We touch your feet. Please save our brother’ represent civility, humility and good manners.

‘How many places have you worked in?’
‘I’ve worked in Gokak and many other places, but in no mill is there as much harassment as there is in the Latur Mill.’
‘Why is it so?’ I asked.
‘There the leaders of mill workers do not allow such injustice,’ was his reply.
‘Ramanna,’ then I asked him, ‘what would happen, if I were to take the lead and fight against this injustice?’

He said, ‘If you’ll do such a thing, all workers will carry you over their heads and dance.’ (p.147)

The above conversation is between the mill worker Ramanna and Laxman. Both of them belong to middle class society. They talk about the injustices and harassment of mill workers at Latur mill. Laxman’s linguistic expression such as ‘if I were to take the lead and fight against this injustice’ reveals his wish to lead and fight against the injustices of mill workers. The impact of social class is clearly seen on the language used by Laxman.

‘Bastard you sleep? Is it your father’s mill? Don’t you get paid?’ (p.150)

One day when Laxman fell asleep, the supervisor, came there. He held Laxman by the neck and pushed him against the machine. The above remark made by the supervisor throws light on the condition of the workers in the spinning mill. The mill workers live wretchedly miserable life at the Latur Spinning Mill.

“I told the Inspector, ‘Let me be treated here. I’ll not go.’ The Inspector held my hand, ‘No brother, don’t be obstinate. It’s our duty. We must save you.’ I fell at the feet of Inspector and prayed, ‘Let me sit in front of the Collector’s office. Let people see our misery.’ The Inspector said, ‘Gaikwadji, if the life is safe and sound, any number of conquests are possible. Why do you want to lose your life?’” (p.158)

The above conversation is between the Sikh Police Inspector and the Union Leader. Both of them are educated and belong to different religions and social class. Their exchanges clearly revise the relationship between police and leaders. They show mutual respect which is essential in maintaining healthy relationships. The Police
Inspector sees the opinions and values of the Union Leader as worthy of serious consideration.

"Tell Laxman Gaikwad not to be unduly obstinate. Tell him that it was I who had taken him up on the Board of Directors.' He had sent B.L.Gaikwad, a closely-related brother of mine to advise me. Then I would explain to him, 'Dada, my work is genuine and honest. Even though we are Pathruts and the Manager, a Wadar, he has stalled and frustrated the workers’ demands. He is not only my enemy but the enemy of the workers as well.” (p.159)

The above expressions uttered by the Manager and the Union leader (Laxman Gaikwad) throw light on the positions of the two on the issue related to mill workers. Both of them belong to lower castes: one of Wadar who is against the mill workers and the other of Pathrut who advocates workers demands. They treat each other in rude and disrespectful ways. The Manager does not honour their relationship. His position sabotages conversation and completely destroys the hope for honest discussion. The following extract is worth studying:

"'Patil, if there is any function in Kawatha, you take money only from us. This time we won’t pay the usual exorbitant amounts. We’ll pay only Rs.11 each.’
The Patil, the Sarpanch and the other Marathas were furious to hear the Pathruts. Some vagabonds from the village came brandishing sticks and axes. These vagabonds attacked our people ferociously, muttering: ‘These Uchalya people have gone berserk and they dare argue with the Patil. Let’s teach them a lesson.’ Shiva Jadhav and Vishnu were severely wounded. The police did not intervene, though they came to know of the attack.” (p.194)
The social practice of observing Mahadeo Fair is presented in this conversation. High castes (The Patil, the Sarpanch and the Marathas) demand the Fair levy from Uchalya community. Opposing this practice, some ten to twelve people of the community living at Kawatha refuse to pay exorbitant contributions for the Fair. Consequently, they were assaulted by influential people, which is an act of communal violence. Vagabonds use unkind words to control and attack Uchalya people. Their verbal abuse is demeaning and disrespectful. They intended to scare and intimidate lower caste people for not getting their way. There is another incident in the memoir, which depicts the communal clash between the superintendent of the police and the narrator himself, which is worth studying:

“Then Laxman Gaikwad rang Shri Chaudhari, the then S.P. at Usmanabad from Umarga Post Office and told him, ‘If your police do not arrive at Kawatha by four in the morning, the vagabonds of this place will murder at least two or three people to our community. Please give full protection against the attackers. If anything untoward happens, your police department will be responsible.’ I had warned an SP in such outspoken terms.” (p.195)

The act of communal clash influenced Laxman’s linguistic behavior and communication style with the S. P. at Usmanabad. Becoming aggressive in his speech, Laxman warns the S. P. in outspoken terms because the police rarely prosecute those responsible for abuses that range from rape to murder. The following short extract throws light on the corruption in the government offices:

“I told the Dy. Engineer, ‘Saheb, I shall willingly pay whatever is your percentage of the bill.’ The boss acquiesced and the bill was passed for further action.” (p.221)
Corruption in government offices is one of the social aspects, which has an influence on the language of the character like Laxman. His words are part of social interaction that involves constant attention to hierarchy, respect, honour and the feelings of others. He follows the rules of etiquette, which helps him to facilitate his social relationship with the Engineer.

“In the meanwhile, one of my leading and responsible campaigners, Wanzarshe, played me false and campaigned for the rival candidates. He would do without my knowledge and then report to me, “Gaikwad-Saheb, I have campaigned for you through all the villages,” and then go on to add; “The campaigners of the other candidates are hogging chicken, mutton, and biryani; they have hundreds of rupees in their pockets. You’re not giving us even bhakar-pithale in time, We’ll wait for two more days and if things continue in this way, we’ll break away and campaign for other candidates.”” (p.227)

Wanzarshe is one of the leading and responsible campaigners of Laxman Gaikwad. His language is greatly influenced by social and political experience. Wanzarshe’s claim he makes about his own and his leaders’ identities affect the form and content of his act of speaking. His socially and politically influenced linguistic form defines the social situations of the participants.

“Laxman Gaikwad himself canvassed, moving around in the jeep and shouting slogans: ‘Vote the poor to help the poor: Vote for Laxman Gaikwad.”” (p.228)

Election sloganeering is an important form of communication that is used to persuade voters. The slogans are usually a word, phrase or sentence, which politicians constantly recite in the course of presenting campaign speeches. Here, Laxman Gaikwad’s campaign slogan advertizes his political mission or ideology. The words
are appealing and emotive which appeal to the emotion of the voters. The word ‘poor’ in this context of usage is a strong metaphor, which presents the candidate as someone ever ready to help/serve the people. By using this word, Laxman Gaikwad suggests that the voters and the candidate belong to same social class.

B) The Outcaste

This memoir unveils the orthodox attitude of the caste Hindus towards the outcasts who suffer relentlessly owing to the discriminatory treatment meted out to them by the so called upper caste people. Consider the following linguistic expressions:

“One day in the school, Ismillya, Maula’s son, was teasing Umbrya calling him ‘a base born’. As I reached there he said, ‘Here’s another base born who swallowed our ox.’” (pp.15-16)

The discrimination extended to education too with the school system dominated by the higher castes. In many rural schools, Dalit children are not welcome. The linguistic unit ‘a base born’ means of low birth or origin. The upper-caste boys have some difficulty coping with social status of Dalit boys.

“Once, in summer, as usual Sharan was playing with Arjya, a Mang. Thirsty, we entered my house and I drank water first before giving the cup to Arjya. Santamai shouted, ‘Why do you play with that boy? Is there no one else in the whole village to play with? Don’t give him water in that vessel. If he touches it, he will defile it. Go away.’ .... ‘If you play anymore with the Mang boys, I will stop feeding you. You can then go to Mangwada. Are you born from the seed of a Mang that you keep their company? You are the son of a village head. You must eat and play like a prince. You are the son of a Patil...” (p.20)

Caste is one of the major factors in the Indian social system. In Maharashtra among the Dalits the Mahar, Mang and Chambhar are the most influencing castes in the
social context. Compared to these castes, the Mang caste is not influencing. The above expression made by Santamai suggests that even the lower caste people follow the rules of discrimination. Santamai tells Sharan not to play with the boy named Arjya who belongs to Mang community. Santamai, Sharankumar’s grandmother, thinks of him as high caste boy because he is the illegitimate son of Patil. Let us examine the following extract:

“Sharankumar wanted a haircut. So he went to the barber for the first time. The barber first looked at me and then at my head. He shouted, ‘Don’t stand here. I am not going to shave your head.’ I showed him my money. Another customer asked me to sit down and take my turn. At that the barber, Isunath, got wild, ‘He is a Mahar. Let him go.’” (p.22)

The above incident shows how far caste system is deeply rooted in Indian Social structure. The concept of defilement due to physical contact with a Dalit has still persists. The contempt that an upper-caste Hindu shows towards a Dalit is humiliating. Impact of some social aspect is observed in the following expressions:

“I was very unpredictable lad. One day I and Parshya entered the temple of Ithoba. Parshya’s father saw what we had done. He didn’t like our rebellious behaviour. He kept shouting, ‘I want to live in this village. Why do you boys behave like this? The village will humiliate me someday because of your behaviour. No one has ever slandered me for anything. I will break your leg if you behave like this again.” (p.61-62)

Parshya’s father is very angry because a Dalit’s entering the temple is considered as a crime in the society. Dalits were supposed to chant their prayers from the steps outside. Their entering a temple makes God impure. Eventually, they were expected to behave responsibly. The above expressions signify the discrimination at the door of
the God. The reaction given by Parshya’s father, “the village will humiliate me someday because of your behaviour” shows the impact of social customs on his linguistic expressions. At some point in the memoir, one comes across an incident in which a girl from the so called upper caste gets angry with the Dalit boys because of the latter’s touch. The following extract illustrates this point:

“Parshya and I were on our way to pluck the fruits of a toddy palm. We saw Shobhi approaching. She was carrying a vessel of water on her head. Parshya and I were walking. As it was a narrow path Shobhi asked us to stay clear and let her pass. She got angry when Parshya started arguing. She said, ‘Mahars have become bold these days. They now dare to walk straight up to you. Can’t you see I am carrying drinking water? Your touch will make it impure.’” (p.70)

In the above expressions, social custom of untouchability is observed. Shobhi gets angry because Sharan and Parshya come in her way when she is carrying a pitcher of water on her head. Socially acknowledged custom was if Dalits touched water filled by the non-Dalits, the latter threw away the water. Their touch would make water impure, which was considered as a social crime. Dalits were supposed to stay away. Shobhi’s linguistic behaviour and communicative style indicate the impact of social practice on the use of language.

“We gave in and let her go, though her insulting words had angered us. One day we planned our revenge. We decided to obstruct her on her way to her farm. ....... Parshya stood in her way and gripped her hand. I was scared but the thought of revenge was stronger. Parshya was saying to her, ‘So you call us Mahars, don’t you? Your water gets impure if we touch it, if that is so then why doesn’t this river turn impure? If a human being becomes impure by our mere touch then why didn’t your colour change to green or yellow, as it
happens when someone is sick or poisoned? Why didn’t the food in your bundle rot? If you consider us Mahars then answer my questions, or we won’t let you go.” (p.71)

The above expression clearly shows the reaction of Dalit boys against the linguistic behaviour of non-Dalit girl. Parshya and Sharan accuse Shobhi for calling them Mahars and her water getting impure by their touch. They ask several questions on the issue of untouchability. Shobhi stood before them as a symbol of the caste system.

“I still remember something that took place one Saturday. Shivappa’s wife asked me to help her put the bundle down. So I helped her. The moment Shivappa saw it, he grew angrier and said, ‘He is Mahar. He is Santamai’s grandson.” (p.81)

Shivappa’s linguistic behaviour shows the hatred of the Dalit people. For Sharan, it is a big crime to be born as a Mahar or Santamai’s grandson. He actually wants to help Shivappa’s wife to put her bundle down, but his touch is considered impure. Shivappa’s linguistic units indicate how Dalits suffer invidious discrimination and mistreatment at the hands of upper caste members of the society.

“The clerk asked in surprise, ‘Is there Limbale among the Mahar as well?’ I replied, ‘Yes,’ and walked away.” (p.82)

In this incident, the clerk suspects that Limbale is a Patil’s name and how it would be of Sharan Kumar Limbale, a Mahar boy. Limbale is afraid of his caste because he can’t claim his father’s caste and religion. The clerk’s linguistic units such as ‘Is there Limbale among the Mahar as well?’ clearly show the effect of social class/caste on the language of the character. The question asked by the clerk reveals that Maharashtrian surnames are influenced by religion, profession, region and caste.
“I was on the way to see my prospective wife, Janabai’s niece, who was supposed to come to Janabai’s house. Mallya asked if Janabai had brought along the girl. Suddenly she went wild and shouted, ‘We haven’t yet lost our self-respect. Our family is of pure blood so we also expect the same of a bridegroom. Just anyone won’t do for us. What does it matter however good the man is?’” (p.88)

Janabai comes to know that Sharan is a bastard. Her words pierced his heart. The impact of social context is clearly seen through Janabai’s linguistic units such as ‘self-respect’ and ‘of pure blood.’ The above expression shows the discrimination based on ‘social origin.’

“Mallya’s uncle Maryappa, on getting to know the whole matter, was furious with Janabai. He said, ‘There is no high or low born in our Buddhist religion. I will give my daughter to him.”’ (p.88)

The impact of social and religious values is clearly seen on Maryappa’s linguistic expression ‘There is no high or low born in our Buddhist religion’. It suggests nobody is lower and higher by caste or birth in Buddhist religion and also points at the social discrimination in Hindu religion on the basis of caste/birth.

“On the wedding day, Sharan grabbed the microphone and spoke with feeling. ‘My wedding has not yet taken place. I don’t accept what has happened just now because I don’t believe in Hindu rituals. We are going to be wedded according to Buddhist rituals. So those who have concern for us need not go away.”’ (p.99)
Most of the religions in India regard wedding as more of a religious ritual than a social function. Indian weddings are a perfect blend of traditions, values and celebrations. Sharan’s wedding ceremony is performed in accordance with the Hindu marriage rituals. But he wishes to get marry according to Buddhist rituals. The linguistic units such as *I don’t believe in Hindu rituals. We are going to be wedded according to Buddhist rituals* are examples of the religious values, which cause influence on his linguistic expressions. The convincing speech of Sharan is the result of the impact of religious and social context.

**C) The Prisons We Broke**

The present memoir is written by a female writer whose life story is a revelation to the readers because she narrates the heart-rending experiences in her life. The pathos and the humiliations inflicted on her by the socially dominant class are worth studying from the point of view of social justice and equality of gender. The narrator speaks volumes about the wounds caused by the society, which would be never healed. The following extract illustrates the humiliation inflicted on her by the established society:

“*Standing in the courtyard, keeping a distance from the shopkeeper, she would pull her pallav over her face then, using the most reverential and polite terms of address, she would beg him with utmost humility to sell her the things she wanted. ‘Appasab, could you please give this despicable Mahar woman some shikakai for one paisa and half a shell of dry coconut with black skin?’ The shopkeeper’s children would be trickling out into the courtyard for their morning ablutions. He would give the innocent children lessons in social behaviour, ‘Chabu, hey you, can’t you see the dirty Mahar woman standing there? Now don’t you touch her. Keep your distance.’ Immediately our Mahar woman, gathering her rags around her tightly so as not to pollute the child,*"
would say, ‘Take care little master! Please keep a distance. Don’t come too close. You might touch me and get polluted.” (p.13-14)

The above conversation is between a Mahar woman and a shopkeeper. The style of communication clearly suggests that the language used by the characters is greatly influenced by social factor like untouchability. A Mahar woman who has low social status follows the rules of communication etiquettes. She uses the most reverential and polite terms of address ‘Appasab’ for the shopkeeper. The other conversational partner, the shopkeeper, uses the linguistic units such as ‘can’t you see the dirty Mahar woman standing there? Now don’t you touch her. Keep your distance.’ reveals his high social status. Moreover, the Mahar woman’s linguistic expressions ‘Take care little master! Please keep a distance. Don’t come too close. You might touch me and get polluted’ give the innocent children lessons in social behaviour. In another incident, one comes across the humiliation caused by the orthodox customs and traditions. Let us examine the following extract in the light of the then existing social customs:

‘The master would simply explode in rage. He would march straight to the Mahar chawdi, summon all the Mahars there and kick up a big fuss. ‘Who, just tell me, who the hell is that new girl? Doesn’t she know that she has to bow down to the master? Shameless bitch! How dare she pass me without showing due respect?

Then the girl’s sasra and other elderly men from the community would fall at the man’s feet in utter supplication, begging for mercy. ‘No, no kind master! That girl is a new animal in the herd! Quite foolish and ignorant. If she has erred, I, her sasra, fall at your feet, but please forgive us for this crime.’

‘No! You mahars are transgressing your limits. It is all this food that you get free of cost that has made you forget your place, isn’t it? But listen carefully. Next time, if anybody passes by me without bowing, you’ve had it! No mercy
would be shown to you any longer. What do you take us for? Are we Mahars like you or do you take us naive children? Daring to pass by me without bowing! Think twice before doing any such thing again!’

At this, everyone would beg him again, ‘No, no, master, we will not let such a thing happen again! Please forgive us this time.” (p.53)

Untouchability is one of the greatest social evils that existed in Indian society in the past. The above conversation throws light on how language of the characters from underprivileged group is influenced by untouchability. The Mahars are not allowed to use the regular road. When somebody from the high-castes walks from the opposite direction, the Mahars have to make the way for them and salute them. If a newly-wed girl unknowingly breaks this social custom, it is considered as a crime and the whole community suffers for this. The girl’s father-in-law and other elderly men from the community beg for mercy. The linguistic units such as ‘You mahars are transgressing your limits, if anybody passes by me without bowing, you’ve had it’ are the threatening remarks which show the influence of the dominant social group’s language on the speaker.

“‘The Brahmin kaki, sitting in the cool shade and supervising this operation, would keep shouting instruction after instruction, ‘Listen carefully, you dumb Mahar women, check the sticks well. If you overlook any of the threads sticking to the wood, there will be a lot of trouble. The Mahar women would check the bundles carefully, saying, ‘Kaki, we have taken out every strand of hair and thread from the sticks. Each stick has been checked. Have we gone mad that we will pollute your house? You are god’s own people. Don’t we know even that?” (p.55)

The above conversation is between the Brahmin kaki and Mahar women. The Brahmin kaki’s linguistic term ‘you dumb Mahar women’ shows the way high caste
Hindu woman addresses the low caste women. On the contrary, Mahar women call her ‘Kaki’ which is a respectful term in Maharashtrian culture. The linguistic expressions ‘You are god’s own people. Don’t we know even that?’ reveals social awareness of the Mahar women.

4.2.2 Age Factor

The speaker’s age has emerged as one of the most important social factors in the quantitative study of language variation. Age is one of the major independent variables in language change. Young people or adolescents are more likely to implement linguistic changes than are their elders; they are sometimes referred to as the ‘innovators’. The parents belong to a different speech community from the one in which the children are being raised. Children speak more like their peers than their elders do. Classmates and close friends are linguistically more influential than teachers and parents.

Age can affect language greatly. It is readily observed that teenagers speak differently from older generations and that very young children clearly speak differently from older children. Language in that case is a sign of identification with a group of people who share similar life experiences, philosophies and desires, and also a similar level of maturity.

In the Dalit autobiographies, characters of different age groups use different variety of language. Following conversational pieces show how the age factor plays an important role in influencing the characters’ use of language.

A) The Branded

In this autobiography, one come across several instances where age factor dominates as far as the linguistic behaviour of the characters is concerned. Consider the following expression of the mother of the narrator:

“While setting out Mother said, ‘Kesarbai, Kashibai look after my child with love and care. I’m not sure that I’ll come back alive.” (p.30)
The above expression by Laxman’s mother shows the impact of age group. She pleads to neighbouring ladies to look after her child with love and care as she is not sure of her coming back alive. Mother’s emotional expression serves the important function of showing other ladies how she feels about her child and thus plays pivotal role in social exchange.

“Anna, Dada, Bhau prepared to leave on a usual thieving mission. I said to Manikdada, ‘Take me with you. You are going to Tuljapur for thieving and my school is also closed. Let me go with you to bow in obeisance and pay my respects to the Goddess.’ Anna said, ‘You’re a school-going boy. If you are caught by the police, you’ll be removed from the school. Your name will be entered in the police record as a thief.’” (pp.47-48)

The above conversation between Laxman and his elder brother Anna shows the impact of age group of Laxman’s brother. He takes care of Laxman at the best of her abilities. The elder brother’s expressions have the shade of age of character. Such feelings are commonly observed among elder brothers.

“Laxman and his brothers returned with good loot from Tuljapur Fair. Manikdada said to Father, ‘Laxman brought success. He is lucky. Father, however, promptly rejected Dada’s remark and said, ‘Only the three of you may go on thieving trips, let him go to school!’ Turning to me he said, ‘Look Laxman, you don’t go again with them. You may in the vacation. Don’t ever miss school.’” (p.51)

Above conversation between Manikdada and his father clearly shows how the language used by a young person is different from language of fatherly person. The linguistic units used by Manikdada are the best examples of the utter shallowness of young people. On the other hand, the linguistic units father uses are authoritative and
appropriate to any father. These expressions have distinct shade of age of character. The old persons generally show maturity while expressing their thoughts.

“I went to meet Baba at Chamle’s place. Baba said, ‘Laxman, my child, you’ve gone so far away for service, I’m now quite old. I might die suddenly any time, and I’ll not be able to see you. Come here now. How many days can I go on labouring? My master also does not look after me well.’ I assured Baba: ‘I’ll take you to Latur. I’ll take up a job there.’” (pp.114-115)

The above conversation is between Laxman and his father. It reveals the aged father’s love for his son. The father feels that he might die suddenly any time and he will not be able to see Laxman. Life’s journey seems to be harder for the father. He asserts the completely helpless, mindless and distraught feelings. His expressions make Laxman guilty for not appreciating all that the father did for him over the years. Laxman promises him to take him to Latur and take up a job for getting things better.

“He said, ‘You take your own decision. I’ve no personal interest, but don’t marry into the circle of close relatives. They would not respect you, though they may speak sweet words now.’” (p.128)

Laxman’s brothers negotiated two separate marriages with two different girls for Laxman. Dada insisted that Chhabu, the girl from Kavatha, be preferred as Laxman’s wife, while Anna and Bhau voiced their preference for Babusha’s sister from Jawali. Laxman was in a quandary. When he asked his father, the father gives the above explanation. His linguistic units clearly show that there is a difference between valid advice and suggestions based on self-interest. He is very realistic in his words of advice. An experienced and aged man like Laxman’s father can give such an advice.
“The next day we decided to return to Latur. My mother-in-law to be told me,
‘Look Laxmanrao, you’re my son-in-law. Now you’re like a son to me. Do
not pay heed to what anybody says. Otherwise we’ll feel insulted.’ I assured
her, “Nothing of the kind’ll happen. Don’t worry.” (p.131)

The above conversation is between Laxman and his Mother-in-law. This relationship
is difficult and traditionally challenged. The Mother-in-law considers him as a son
and advises him not to pay attention to others’ saying and insult us. Laxman respects
his Mother-in-law’s feelings and promises her not to worry.

“Dada, Anna and Bhau, began to persuade me in unison, ‘Laxman, listen to
us, it’s good for you. Aunt will get closer to you with this marriage.’ I still
firmly declined to go back on the first engagement. Aunt urged again,
‘Laxman, your uncle has picked up some gold in his theft. I’ll make you a
gold locket. Listen to me.’ I replied, ‘Look aunt, I’ve given my word to them.
They have stitched clothes for me. The marriage is hardly eight-ten days
away. Even if you promise me a gold bed, I’ll marry the girl from Kavatha.’”
(p.132)

In the above conversation, three elderly brothers advise Laxman on marriage issue.
The aunt also suggests him to marry her girl and makes an offer of a gold locket to
him. In spite of these temptations, Laxman firmly denies their proposal to keep his
promise of marrying the girl from Kawatha.

“Father, don’t go to work. Live here with me, we will manage with whatever
little I get.’ Father said, ‘No, Laxman. First you arrange your family life,
make for yourself a decent living. Pay back your loans. I shall return to you
eventually. Nobody is prepared to look after Harchanda, so you look after him.” (p.137)

The above conversation is between Laxman and his father. Laxman urges his father not to go back on his work. The Father uses supportive speech to sort out the matter. His fatherly words such as *First you arrange your family life, make for yourself a decent living* suggest to bring change in his life. It indicates that the linguistic expressions of the old persons are typically influenced by the hardships they faced earlier in life.

B) The Outcaste

In this autobiography also, age is a dominating factor as far as the linguistic expressions of the characters are concerned. It is evident in the following example:

“Masamai used to force me to go to village feast. She said, ‘Do you want me to feed you with dust—there is nothing else in this house. You are not yet old enough to go digging to earn living. Get out. Come back only after eating at the feast. You have too much of self-respect. From where should I produce food for you? Go and find out if anyone would like to buy me in the market! You won’t be happy until you swallow me!’” (p.9)

The above conversation is between Masamai and Sharan. Being a mother, the language of Masamai is typical. The linguistic units she uses are befitting to any mother living in utter poverty. Her expression such as ‘You are not yet old enough to go digging to earn living’ clearly shows her love for Sharan. At the same time, Masamai’s helplessness can be seen through the linguistic expression such as ‘From where should I produce food for you?’ The linguistic units such as ‘You won’t be happy until you swallow me!’ show how her helpless feelings transform into anger. Such feelings are commonly observed among the mothers belonging to the lower strata of the society. Another example would make this point more clear:
“On market day, a fruit vendor hit Vani with his chappal in the crowded market because she had stolen just a banana. By evening the market dispersed. Vani had collected banana skins which people had discarded after eating the fruit. She sat by the street and ate the skins. I hit Vani. .... Vani grumbled, ‘Mother, Anna hit me.’ I replied sternly, ‘She was eating banana skins thrown away by people.’ When I accepted that I hit her, mother hissed at me, ‘Let her eat worms and live. Why do you make it a matter of prestige?’”

(p.22)

The above conversation is among Vani, Sharan and Masamai. All the three belong to different age groups. The linguistic expressions used by them show the impact of age factor on the language they use. Sharan hits Vani for eating banana skins thrown away by people. His reaction is quite understandable and natural. The mother’s linguistic units such as ‘Let her eat worms and live. Why do you make it a matter of prestige?’ reveal the fact that hunger is the biggest problem before the Dalits/poor people.

“Santamai then told the story of Rohidasmama. When Rohidasmama’s affair became known, the entire Maharwada went for him with sticks and axes. ... Santamai was moved, she said, ‘The Mahars are very fierce people. They will cut you into pieces, and there will be no one to care for us. Our house has neither a male child nor a female one to continue our lives. They will force us to sleep with them. You would better stop your affair with Shewanta. If you marry any girl from the village the entire Maharwada will support you.”

(p.27)

Santamai, Sharan’s grandmother, is one of the old characters in the autobiography. The above expressions have a shade of age of the character. It creates an impact on
her language. She advises Sharan like any other grandmother. She makes him aware of many things, which he does not know. Her opinions about Mahar community are a matter of experience and age. Santamai’s informative words definitely appeal to the sensitive mind of Sharan. Her linguistic expression such as ‘You would better stop your affair with Shewanta’ indicates the utmost responsibilities and feelings of utmost care for Sharan. Her language has an impact of age factor. The following is one of the glaring examples:

“When Dada was angry with me, I too got wild. I insulted him saying, ‘You are a Muslim. You are not my father, so don’t you dare hit me.’ Dada would lower the hand he had raised to hit me.” (p.63)

In this extract, there are only two characters: Dada and Sharan. Dada is Sharan’s grandfather in the sense that he lives with Santamai, Sharan’s grandmother. The child is innocent about the relationship between them. His reaction ‘you are a Muslim. You are not my father’, clearly shows the influence of age factor on the language he uses. The expression such as ‘so don’t you dare hit me’ reflects grandson’s anger to grandfather.

“Damuanna came to our house carrying Ithal Kamble on his back. Bhangaryava, Masamai’s mother-in-law came to us. She cried all the time. She said in plaintive tone, ‘All of you should have, in fact, been born in my house. Had that happened my house would have been really complete. It is all disrupted because I was vulnerable to people’s gossip. I am responsible for the whole trouble. I am the culprit.” (p.69)

Bhangaryava, a minor character in the autobiography, is Masamai’s mother-in-law. She, being an old woman, is regretting for what she had done to family. Her linguistic expressions like ‘I am responsible for the whole trouble. I am the culprit.’ suggest that
she is responsible for the miserable conditions of the family. Her linguistic behavior is suitable to any other old woman.

“After visiting home, the time for my departure came. At the bus stand, Dada said, ‘Be careful when you spend money.’” (p.111)

Dada is one of the old characters in the autobiography. He is supposed to be a grandfather by Sharan. His linguistic utterance, ‘Be careful when you spend money’ clearly shows the influence of age factor on the language of the character. Dada, like any other grandfather, advises the grandson to be careful while spending money. He also makes him aware of the importance of money. In Indian context, elderly people always give advice to the younger ones.

C) The Prisons We Broke

This memoir is written by Baby Kamble with a view to unfold the untold miseries and humiliations inflicted on her and her people by the caste Hindus who believe in the hierarchal social structure and torture the downtrodden for no obvious fault of theirs. Let us study the utterance of the narrator’s mother:

“She often told me, ‘Baby, You have only one brother. It is your duty to help him!’” (p.6)

The above expression is uttered by Baby Kamble’s mother. She, like any other mother, makes Baby aware of her responsibility to look after her brother. Her linguistic behaviour clearly suggests that her poverty-stricken life makes her speak in this way. The age factor has great influence on the language used by the characters.

“Then an elderly Mahar would take charge of the affairs, distribute the work among them and send them all off on different errands, ‘Boys, now go and fetch Dadu’s Shriranga, Guni’s Sadya, Awa’s Ranya. The buffalo will be very difficult to control. You won’t be able to handle it by yourself.’
The boys would immediately set off. They would go from house to house, calling out to people by their names, fetching them to the chawdi. The elders often pretended to scold the young men in mock anger.

‘Come on, you bastards, you know that nobody can do this work except you. Now look sharp. String the buffalo through the nose, take it to the stream, bathe it and bring it back. In the meantime, I’ll send a word to Ranba. Yesha’s daughter-in-law will be our suwasini today. I’ll ask her to put kumkum on the buffalo.” (pp.30-31)

There is a ‘rede jatra’ (buffalo fair) on the Asadh amawasya. On this day, an elderly Mahar distributes the work among younger boys. He asks the boys to call other people at the ‘chawdi’. The linguistic utterance such as ‘Dadu’s Shriranga, Guni’s Sadya, Awa’s Ranya’ suggests that the elderly person can call their younger ones by their father’s name attached to their personal names. Moreover, the elders often pretend to scold the young men in mock anger. Calling the young ones bastards, elders order them to perform various duties assigned to them. The elder one is very convincing in his speech.

4.2.3 Education Factor

In the autobiography under consideration, it is observed that the language of the characters is greatly influenced by the level of education. Educated/literate characters use standard whereas uneducated/illiterate characters use substandard/nonstandard varieties of a language. Educated people use language differently from uneducated people. Most of the characters in the selected Indian Dalit autobiographies are uneducated / illiterate as they are deprived of education. Their utterances show the influence of education.

A) The Branded

In this autobiography, there are glaring instances where education plays a pivotal role in influencing the language of the characters. The nuances of language use are studied
in the following extracts from the point of view of Sociolinguistics. Consider the following extract:

“Our neighbours – Tulshiram, Pandurang, Sambha – accused and chided my father: ‘Because you have admitted your son to school, our children are suffering from loose motion and vomiting. Look, Martanda, since your bastard of a son has started going to school, diseases are visiting us. We are not merchants and Brahmins to admit our children to school. Has anybody from the thieves’ community ever gone to school? Oh Martand! schooling was never good for us. ......If our children started going to school, our race would be doomed. Goddess Yellamma will be furious. Look Martand, if your son continues to go to school, we shall call the Panchayat and ostracize you.’” (pp.16-17)

Most of the characters in the above expression are rustic and hence use the substandard form of language. Tulshiram, Pandurang and Sambha are uneducated people. It causes an influence on their language. It also affects their thoughts having blind faith. They accuse Martand of bringing on diarrhoea and vomiting on their children by sending Laxman to school. They threaten to call the Panchayat and ostracize the family. The community is so ignorant that they felt that sending the children to school would anger the goddess Yellamma. These superstitions and blind beliefs in the people belonging to Pathrut community show how uneducated they are.

“So Martand met Kulkarni Guruji and apprised him of the consequences and requested him to remove Laxman’s name from the school register. Then Kulkurni Guruji came to the lane where our community lived and asked them, ‘If, as you say, your lane is afflicted with cholera because Martand’s son attends school, then why is not the whole village afflicted similarly with
cholera? All the boys and girls also attend the school regularly. Why is only your lane affected?’

Tulshiram said to the Guruji, ‘Their castes have a right (sanctioned by religion and tradition) to learn to read the write, but we are not so permitted.’” (pp.17-18)

The above conversation between Kulkarni Guruji and Tulshiram is the best example which shows how level of education influence the language of the characters. Being a teacher, Kulkarni Guruji has dominated the situation with his linguistic skills. On the contrary, one of the villagers, Tulshiram, being illiterate believes in superstitions and uses linguistic expressions accordingly. He expresses disparities between Dalit and non-Dalit children with regard to their access to education. Tulshiram represents the educational backwardness of the Dalit communities. This conversation demonstrates that people from higher class use standard form of language while lower class people use non-standard form of language.

“Our neighbours, however, were in a way envious of my going to school and nagged my father, ‘Martanda, teach Laxman our thieving skills. What’s the use of schooling for him?” (p.34)

Most of the neighbours of Laxman Gaikwad are uneducated. They do not know the importance of education. They force Martand to teach Laxman thieving skills instead of sending him to school. They believe more in thieving than schooling. The following extract is worth studying:

“One day father saw my note-book and began to beat me with his chappal. He said, ‘The bastard has spoiled the new note-book. Didn’t I take an advance from the master and buy it for him? He has scribbled in the note-book with the pen!’ Then my brother said, ‘The pen is for writing – writing in the note book.’ But father did not believe him. He asked the carpenter’s son who had studied
in school. He also said, ‘Your son has written down dictation from the book in
the note-book.’ Then father relented and said, ‘I beat you foolishly, don’t cry
now.’ (p.35)

In the above conversation, an illiterate father yells at the son for spoiling the new
note-book. Moreover, he accuses him for scribbling in the note-book with the pen. He
confirms the fact with the elder son and carpenter’s son whether the pen is used for
writing in the note-book. Illiterate father is over-sensitive about not being able to read
and write. His linguistics utterances show that he is a member of the lower
socioeconomic level and cultural background.

‘On Independence Day, I went and stood near the manager’s table and began
my speech: ‘Our motherland is free now. But today in our free mothereland
we workers are thrashed with thick sticks. It is not proper. The manager-
saheb may not know that the worker’s cards are torn, Manager-saheb, get any
amount of work done by your workers, but do not thrash us cruelly.’ (p.151)

The above extract is a part of an Independence Day speech delivered by Laxman
Gaikwad, which demonstrates the influence of education on the language used by a
particular social class. Laxman, as a representative of workers in the Spinning Mill,
informs the Manager about the injustices done to them. Being an educated youth, he
expresses his thoughts in standard language and sophisticated way.

“The manager spoke: ‘Worker-friends, I don’t want to speak much today. If
what Laxman Gaikwad has told is true, then it is improper. If any jobber or
supervisor is in the habit of beating workers, he should stop it. Work should
be accomplished through friendly co-operation.’” (p.151)

The Manager is an educated man. He has commanding instructions for which he
applies his language skills. He orders supervisors not to beat workers and suggests
that work should be accomplished through friendly co-operation. The Manager’s linguistic utterances are formal standard business language.

B) The Outcaste

Education factor is the main governing feature of the present memoir. The narrator’s struggle to uplift himself with the help of education is worth appreciating. He strive to get himself educated facing the adversities in his life. The struggle of the narrator in search of knowledge is highly commendable. The linguistic expressions of the narrator and the other characters speak volumes about the thirst of knowledge.

“The name of Hanmanta Limbale, the Patil of Baslegaon, was added to my name in the school record. He threatened the headmaster at a gun point.

Bhosale, the Headmaster, said boldly, ‘The mother of this boy will say who the father is, and I will register only that name in the record.’” (p. 45)

The above expressions made by the Headmaster, a highly educated man. He uses standard form of language. He is very convincing in his speech. The Patil of Baslegaon threatens the headmaster at a gunpoint for adding his name to Sharan’s name in the school record. The response given by the Headmaster is the example of standard variety of language.

“One day Parshya and I decided to make a complaint against Shivram to the police. We took cup and saucer, full of tea, directly to the police station. Parshya, in his father’s dhoti and shirt, stood at the door of the police station and asked in English, ‘May I come in sir?’ The constable shouted at us, ‘What the hell do you want, you sons of bitches?” (p.77)

The conversation takes place at the police station between Sharan, Parshya and the police constable. Sharan and Parshya decide to complain the Police about the caste
discrimination at Shivram’s teashop. The linguistic unit ‘May I come in sir?’ clearly suggests that the speaker of this utterance is an educated man. On the other hand, the linguistic expressions such as ‘What the hell do you want, you sons of bitches?’ reveals the level of education of the speaker. In the above conversation, Sharan and Parshya use a sophisticated language while the police constable uses uncivilized language.

“When the customers were drunk they assured me, ‘Don’t you worry. We will fix your marriage. We will also find a job for you. We know so many people we can influence. But first you must get through your matriculation.’ I had to tell them that I had already passed it and was studying for my MA course. They kept talking nonsense because they were drunk. ‘Boys with BA and MA degrees are useless and unemployed. You just get through your matric and come to us. We will sort out everything for you.”’ (p.98)

Most of the characters in Sharankumar Limbale’s The Outcaste are rustics. Hence, they are bound to speak a substandard form of language. The customers assure Sharan of finding a job after passing matriculation. Sharan is studying for MA course. Most of the customers are uneducated. Their linguistic units ‘Boys with BA and MA degrees are useless and unemployed. You just get through your matric and come to us’ clearly proves the fact. Uneducated customers do not know the levels of educational degrees. The conversation throws light on the impact of the level of education on characters’ speech.

4.2.4 Gender Factor

The relation between language and gender has become one of the major issues in Sociolinguistics since early 1970s. However, the concept of “gender” has not been well defined. To understand the term ‘gender’, it is useful to distinguish the meaning of the word “sex” and that of the word ‘gender’. The term ‘sex’ generally refers to biology and anatomy while ‘gender’ refers to a set of qualities and behaviours
expected from a female or male by society. The behaviour norms of men and women are very different. The differences they display in general are reflected through their respective constraints, views, opportunities, roles and responsibilities.

Although men and women from a given social class belong to the same speech community, they may use different linguistic forms. The linguistic forms used by women and men contrast to some extent in all speech communities.

In Indian Dalit society, women are not provided with an equal opportunity to express themselves. The language they use is different from the one that men use. In order to investigate the differences in using a language, selected conversations of the male and female characters in the autobiographies under study are taken into consideration.

A) The Branded

In this autobiography, gender inequality is visible through the conversations of the male and female characters. Consider the following extract:

“Father always tortured and beat mother suspecting her of infidelity. Whenever mother came late from her milk-selling rounds, father would say, ‘You spend your time with your paramour! Saru is not my daughter.’ When Saru (my elder sister) came to visit us from her husband’s house, father used to treat her very unkindly. He always grumbled: ‘Why do you take her in? Why do you give her a sari and a blouse?’” (p.22)

Pathrut community is predominantly patriarchal where the status of women is vulnerable and weak. Women are not allowed to speak freely. On the contrary, Laxman’s father, Martand speaks in ridiculous and coarse language. His reactions show that he is a dominant character. He accuses his wife of infidelity. He dislikes Saru, his daughter. The above expressions clearly show the way men speak to the opposite sex in Pathrut community.
“She took courage and asked, “What school do you go to?”

I answered with the shyness of a newly-wed bride, ‘Shivaji School. I’m in the ninth standard. I’ve a job in a spinning mill.’

She was much bolder than I in speaking. She asked me, ‘Come, keep company with me up to my school.’ I frankly told her, ‘Shobha, I’m very poor. You appear to be very rich. I don’t know what people would do to me, if ever they saw us together.’ She retorted, ‘What will they do? Why should we bother about them?” (pp.108-109)

The above conversation is between Laxman and his beloved Shobha. In Indian society, boys and girls use different kind of language. Traditionally, boys are courageous in using language while girls are shy in their expressions. Here, we find Laxman’s linguistic units are uttered with shyness. On the contrary, Shobha is comparatively bolder than Laxman in her language use. This happens because the girl belongs to the higher class and the boy belongs to the lower class society. In spite of this, the sense of intensity and intimacy is found in their communication.

“Elava would ask her husband, ‘Sopana, I brought piles of ornaments. What share did you give me out of them?” Then Sopanya would answer back, ‘Ele, I brought you as my mistress, yet I take you with me as I would a wife. Whenever earnings have been plentiful, I have given you your share willingly. Even then you quarrel with me.”” (p.124)

The above conversation is between Elava and Sopana. Elava’s expressions suggest that she wants equal share in the earnings. She is well-mannered and courteous in her language. Nevertheless, the kind of language that Sopana uses is a determining factor for Elava to understand her position. His foul and filthy language shows his uncultured social background. The above conversation shows that the difference in
language between men and women is a consequence of male dominance and female subordination.

“I asked her, ‘What’s your name?’

She said, ‘Chhabu.’” (p.130)

‘Bride seeing ceremony’ is one of the important aspects of Indian wedding traditions. In this ceremony, the bride has to answer the questions asked by the groom. In the above conversation, Laxman asks the girl in context her name and she responds to it positively. The bride innocently answers the question. The impact of gender on the language of character is clearly seen in the above expressions.

B) The Outcaste

In this autobiography too, we come across several instances of how gender influences the language of male and female characters. Let us study the following short extract:

“Shewanta used to say to me, ‘I am meant only for you. I will either marry you or drown myself in a well.’” (p.54)

The above expressions clearly show that Shewanta is in love with Sharan. Her linguistic units ‘I am meant only for you. I will either marry you or drown myself in a well’ show the tenderness in woman’s language. She appears to be devoted, honest and faithful in using the linguistic expressions. She is a typical Indian woman devoted in love. The following extract is worth studying:

“Once Kaka brought Hanmanta along to dine with us. Kaka was the Patil of Hanoor and Hanmanta was the Patil of Baslegaon. Both were drunk. My mother started a fierce quarrel. She drove both out of the house. But they
came back. My mother didn’t open the door. She kept shouting, ‘If you two don’t go away instantly I will burn myself.’ ” (p.61)

The above expression is a trademark of how female characters use the power principle to threaten their male counterparts on specific occasions. Both the Patils misbehave with her. She gets irritated by their behaviour. Her linguistic units ‘If you two don’t go away instantly I will burn myself’ show that Sharan’s mother is fed up with the two Patils. She uses face-threatening strategies to shoo the two men away.

“We did quarrel, but that was only while we were playing. Sometimes when Nagi got annoyed with me, she abused me, ‘You have no connections with us. Nobody knows where you come from. Our fathers are not the same.” (p.63)

The above conversation is between Sharan and his sister, Nagi. Some important features of the language used by women are found in the linguistic units uttered by Nagi. She doubts his origin and refuses to have any connection between them. She, being a woman, uses linguistic expressions such as ‘Our fathers are not the same’ which clearly means that they have same mother but not the same father. The expressions show the way women use language in their day-to-day life.

C) The Prisons We Broke

In this autobiography also, we come across certain examples, which show the impact of gender on the language used by the characters. The following extract illustrates this point:

“The old man turned to the women around him, ‘Hey you, are you women from good families or female donkeys? Go and fetch the kumkum box like a good wife. Give the mother her due! It is because of your stupid ignorance that the mother is angry. Hurry up, smear the mother’s forehead with kumkum and haldi.” (p.24)
The expressions of the old man show that he has power over the female in the context. He scolds the women by calling them as ‘female donkeys’ and orders them to ‘smear the mother’s forehead with kumkum and haldi’. The expressions reveal how the elderly males behave with their female counterparts in a tradition bound society.

“Then one of them would turn to the women, ‘And you there, Sitayvhini, Kondaykaku and Gunaykaku, take these grains of jowar and distribute them among the households for pounding. Take care that the work is done well; otherwise, mind you, we’ll hang onions in your hair. Gunayakku and Kondaykaku, take these red chilles and grind them fine. The panji must be good. Remember, you are not like sluts on the streets! So don’t cook like them. The panji must taste good. It must become like laki, soft and properly mixed. Relatives and guests will come from all nook and corner for the fair so take care that the food is cooked well.’ And the women, pulling their heads to show that they were decent housewives, and not like some woman on the street, would say in reassurance, ‘Oh karbhari, we do belong to respectable families! We know how these are done. Don’t worry, leave it to us. We’ll cook the barbat so well that our guests would never have tasted anything so delicious in their whole lives.’” (p.31)

The above extract from the autobiography shows how men and women differ in the way they use language to communicate with each other. The linguistic expression, ‘Take care that the work is done well; otherwise, mind you, we’ll hang onions in your hair’, shows that men are dominant, forceful and convincing in their linguistic exchanges. The linguistic units such as ‘Remember, you are not like sluts on the streets! So don’t cook like them’ show that men use profane language in their conversations. On the contrary, expressions like ‘Don’t worry, leave it to us’ indicate
that women generally use face saving strategies to make the males feel happy. The differences reflected in above communication are the results of the fact that socially men are dominant and women are subordinate in a marginalized community.

“Immediately, the sasu would sarcastically add her own bit to the tirade, ‘Her father must be a Patil, you know, that’s why she’s behaving so! What does she know about our customs! Impudent bitch! They are our masters, do you understand? We must behave according to our custom, that’s our religion! Was your mother a she-donkey that you behave so? Didn’t she teach you anything? Your sasra moves among respectable people and you have blackened his face!’” (pp.53-54)

The above expression is the best example of how women speak to other women. The sasu (Mother-in-law) criticizes the Daughter-in-law for misbehaving with the Patil of the village. The term ‘sasu’ referring to Mother-in-law in Indian culture carries negative connotation. The linguistic units such as ‘Impudent bitch, Was your mother a she-donkey that you behave so? Didn’t she teach you anything?’ reveal that how one woman uses the language to abuse the other woman. The above expressions reflect the authoritarian and notorious position of the Mother-in-law in a traditional Indian society.

The above discussion draws attention to how language functions at social, gender, age-based, and education levels within the selected Indian Dalit autobiographies. These factors influence the language used by the characters in the autobiographies.

4.3 Linguistic Experimentation

The role of language in social evolution of the Dalits is very important. The literature of Dalits is increasing its far-reaching appeal day by day with the translations. In other words, Dalit literature begins to be mainstreamed in India and all over the world with the appearance of the English translations of Marathi Dalit writing. Over the past two decades, quite a few autobiographies have been published in English. Prominent
writers of Indian Dalit Writing like Baburao Bagul, Raja Dhale, Namdev Dhasal, Daya Pawar, Annabhau Sathe, Bandhu Madhav, Laxman Mane, Laxman Gaikwad, Sharankumar Limbale, Waman Nimbalkar, Baby Kamble and Joyti Lanjewar have used Marathi language very creatively in their works. They have created a language of their own, which is seldom used, in mainstream Marathi literature. The linguistic features of Marathi literature are of vital importance. Translating Marathi Dalit writings into English is a major challenge for anyone as it can erase the regional differentiations and cultural oppressions. To render particular Dalit experiences into English is a tough task for both writer and translator.

Dalit autobiographers prefer to use their day-to-day spoken languages to those of the standard languages of the mainstream autobiographies. Since translation empirically remains a linguistically centred activity, the mediations of language to transfer culture could not obviously be ignored. Translators: P. A. Kolharkar (*Uchalya as The Branded*), Santosh Bhoomkar (*Akkarmashi as The Outcaste*) and Maya Pandit (*Jina Amucha as The Prisons We Broke*) have tried their level best to translate these works into English. These translations show how far English can be ‘Indianized’. In these translations, we find that Indianization and hybridization are an integral part of their linguistic experimentation.

### 4.3.1 Phonological Experimentation

In the translation of selected autobiographies of the Dalit writers, there has been a great impact of the characters’ mother tongue while using English expressions. Indian English is a mixture of other English varieties and Indian dialects. The patterns in Indian English are most strongly correlated with its social features. Phonologically, it has some sounds, which are basically the same of Standard English, but some are not. An attempt is made to identify some of these differences through utterances of the characters.

Some phonological features of Indian English used in the Dalit autobiographies are categorized as follows:
A) Retroflexion:
It is a sound change that has come about independently in some English dialects. The retroflex consonants in Indian English include /t/ (voiceless unaspirated), /th/ (voiceless aspirated), /l/ (voiced unaspirated), and /dh/ (voiced aspirated).

i) Dada said, “I’ll bring it. Their beating is nothing compared with yours. Even the police and the Marathas don’t beat so cruelly. I’ll bring the loot henceforth!” TB (p.7-8)

ii) “You just get through your matric and come to us. We will sort out everything for you.” TO (p.98)

iii) “Take care that the work is done well…” PWB (p.30)

The bold words or the parts of the word indicate retroflexion.

B) Rhoticity:

‘Rhoticity’ is a term which denotes a dialect or variety of English in which /r/ is pronounced before a consonant (as in hard) and at the ends of words (as in far). In other words, rhotic speakers pronounce /r/ in all positions, while non-rhotic speakers pronounce it only if it is followed by a vowel. Rhoticity has strong correspondence with social factors in Indian English. When it comes to English language, especially for an uneducated speaker from India, many sounds and pronunciations need extra attention. The pronunciation of ‘r’ sound is one such challenge for many Indians.

Considering the sociolinguistic factors such as social class and educational background, it is found that the Dalit characters have more rhotic (r-full) pronunciations. The following are some examples taken from the selected autobiographies in which /r/ sound is pronounced at all positions.

i) “Let them see their mother for the last time.” TB (p.30)

ii) “You are rotten people. We have purified you. You were lying on the garbage.” TO (p.100)
iii) “Don’t ever be taken in by your Father’s lofty words.” PWB (p.6)

In the above linguistic expressions, the bold words include the phenomenon of rhoticity.

C) Lack of aspiration in the word-initial position:
The aspirated sound is the pronunciation with an initial release of breath air. The English sounds of p, t and k are ‘aspirated’ at the beginning of a syllable that has the accent. For example - pin, tin, kin are supposed to be aspirated. The speakers with Indian accent habitually miss the required aspiration while pronouncing these sounds. This is because they are used to the speaking habits based on Hindi, Sanskrit or other mother tongues from India. In Indian English p, t, k are well-known to be unaspirated. Following are some examples:

i) Tikaram again said: ‘Will you tell our names, because chilli powder is put in your eyes?’ TB (p.7)

ii) ‘Keep your distance.” PWB (p.14)

In the above expressions, /p/, /t/ and /k/ sounds are unaspirated.

4.3.2 Morphological Experimentation

The morphological structure is an important aspect of the linguistic study of the selected autobiographies. Here, an attempt is made to highlight the skilful inclusion of the instances of reduplication, capitalization, compounding, borrowing, acronyms and initialism. Morphology is the field of the linguistics that studies the internal structure of the words. Indian English morphology is very creative and it is filled with new terms and usages. It has a rich system of inflectional Morphology, which focuses on the grammatical information of words.
A) Reduplication:
Reduplication is a morphological process in which a word or a phrase is repeated exactly or with a slight change. Indian Dalit writers often use reduplication as a way of emphasizing an action. The characters in the autobiographies under study use such reduplication.

i) “See Saab, see for yourself, there is nothing in the hut.” TB (P.2)

ii) “Go ahead! Go ahead!” TB (P.32)

iii) “Run! Run!” TB (P.58)

iv) “Flood! Flood!” TB (P.58)

v) “Let him speak! Let him speak!” TB (p.151)

vi) Wave after wave rose on the surface of the water. TO (p.27)

vii) We made black tea and drank the decoction, plate after plate. TO (p.45)

viii) There’s no merit. No sin. PWB (p.6)

ix) “Yes, yes, quite so, quite so!...” PWB (p.10)

x) They would talk, talk and talk. PWB (p.45)

xi) “Come on, folks, come and collect your share of the leftovers.” PWB (p.77)

In each of the above examples, the principle of reduplication is operative as it emphasizes certain objects and actions through nouns and verbs.

B) Capitalization:
Capitalization is one of the morphological features of English language. It is the act of using upper case letters. These letters are used to give emphasis to or call attention to certain words to distinguish them from the context. Indian Dalit writers use capitalization to make some words call for more attention than other words. All capitalized words appeared in the selected autobiographies tend to have a more
specific meaning than those words spelled with lower-case letters. When words are capitalized, they are noticeable and seem “louder”. Some of the glaring examples are given below:

i) NO NATIVE PLACE.  

ii) Nizam State  

iii) Fourth Standard Board Examination  

iv) Tuljapur Fair  

v) Remand Home  

vi) Spinning Master  

vii) Ganesh Festival  

viii) Camp  

ix) Times  

C) Compounding:

Compounding is a process of word formation in which two or more words are joined together to make a new word. These two or more words combine into a morphological unit and refer to the combination of words that have an independent existence. Indian Dalit autobiographies comprise of different types of compounds, which are derived from different sources like Marathi + English and English + Marathi. The following are some of the noticeable examples that occur in the autobiographies selected for analysis.

i) Village Patil  

ii) Police-Patil  

iii) Bamboo-roofed  

iv) Goddess-Bhavani  

v) Master-kaka
D) Borrowing:

Borrowing is the usual term for the process by which a language (or variety) takes new linguistic material from another language. Borrowing occurs in situations of language contact, and is indeed an almost inevitable consequence of it, although the levels and the types of borrowing which are found differ greatly in different types of contact situation.

The unique aspect of the language of *The Branded* is the use of words and expressions from the register of the thieves. Being a member of Uchalya, a so called criminal tribe, Laxman Gaikwad has used the vocabulary referring to the unlawful profession of stealing to give the flavour of authenticity to his narrative. The following words have been taken from the thieves’ register.

i) *Khistang matne* – Picking pockets (p.10)

ii) *Chappal muthal aanane* – Stealing footwear and bundles of things (p.10)

iii) *Paddu ghalane* – Deception (p.10)

iv) *Uthewaari* – Deception by sleight of hand while engaging persons in conversation (p.10)
One does not come across any example of borrowing in other autobiographies.

E) Acronyms:

The forms of shortening are initialism (also called alphabetism) and acronyms, which reduce each component word to its initial letter. The difference between the two types lies in how the resulting word is pronounced in spoken language, namely letter by letter or without intermission. Acronyms are type of word formation process, and they are viewed as a sub-type of blending. Indian Dalit writers have occasionally made use of this strategy as is evident in the following examples:

i) INTUC - Indian National Trade Union Congress TB (p.150)

ii) TB - Tuberculosis TB (p.154)

F) Initialism

It is an abbreviation formed from the initial components in a phrase or a word. These components may be individual letters or parts of words. There is no universal agreement on the precise definition of various names for such abbreviations or on written usage. Indian Dalit writers have freely made use of this linguistic device in their memoirs as is evident in the following examples:

i) O. K. – All Correct TB (p.46)

ii) Rs. – Rupees TB (p.67)

iii) S. T. – State Transport TB (p.134)

iv) N. P. – Nagarpalika TB (p.176)

v) I.T.I. - Industrial Training Institutes TB (p.187)

vi) S. P. - Superintendent of Police TB (p.195)

vii) C. I. D. - Crime Investigation Department TB (p.196)

viii) B. S. P. – Bahujan Samaj Party TB (p.228)

ix) MA - Master of Arts TO (p.98)
G) Countability of Non-Counts:

Countability of non-count nouns is the morphological feature of Indian English. Indians pluralize many English mass nouns such as litter, furniture, wood, and luggage and in their place they use litters, furnitures, woods and luggages, respectively.

i) My mother, Dhondabai had already slipped away into the woods. TB
(p.2)

ii) Santmuchchar means one who steals from weekly markets or bazaars.
TB (p.4)

The bold words in the above examples illustrate the use of plurality of mass nouns.

4.3.3 Syntactical Experimentation

Generally, the rules of using language at syntactic level are the same in both Standard British English and Indian English. Syntactic structures are acceptable in both the groups. However within the possible options, the preferred structures show some interesting divergence. Some of the peculiar features of Indian English are found in the selected autobiographies such as different parts of speech and the use of articles. Let us illustrate them one by one:
A) Different Parts of Speech

The Branded

i) He had kept it locked with a small lock. **TB** (p.29)
   In the above sentence, the word “lock” is used as a verb as a noun.

ii) “Eh, you son of a Pathrut, take us to your hut, come, let us meet Mankya.” **TB** (p.61)
   ‘Eh’ is a spoken interjection in English that is similar in meaning to ‘Excuse me.’ But in above expression, ‘Eh’ used for calling someone bad, mediocre or ordinary person.

iii) I’ve kept this woman as my mistress. **TB** (p.63)
   In the above sentence, the word “mistress” is used as a noun, which denotes “kept woman”.

iv) Jagtap and I were issued with a notice of the temporary suspension of our service. **TB** (p.165)
   In the above sentence, the preposition ‘with’ is unnecessarily used.

v) He came to know of the arrests. **TB** (p.206)
   He came to know about the arrests.
   In the above sentence, the phrasal verb ‘know of’ is used instead of ‘know about’. It is used when you have heard about the subject but never had any experience with it.

The Outcaste

vi) We small children hung about inside .... **TO** (p.7)
   In the above sentence, the pronoun ‘we’ is used before the subject ‘children’.

vii) Greedily we watched her eat that bhakari. **TO** (p.50)
viii) Unawares, I kept eating piece after piece and finished the whole of it. TO (p.50)

Both the above sentences begin with the adverbs ‘Greedily’ and ‘Unawares’. Starting a sentence with an adverb at the front of the subordinate clause is an interesting way of writing followed by Sharankumar Limbale.

ix) Kaka never felt at home in our house. TO (p.56)

The above sentence, ‘at home’ is an idiom, which means comfortable or relaxed and ‘house’ is a noun, which refers to one’s domicile, the place where one lives.

The Prisons We Broke

x) Both of us stayed with our grandparents. PWB (p.1)

Both of us stayed with grandparents.

xi) All the people of maharwada were illiterate except for my aaja. PWB (p.45)

In the above sentence, the preposition ‘for’ is unnecessarily used.

B) Use of Articles

Sometimes, there is a disagreement among the native speakers of English on the use of article. But in the case of Indian English, there is apparently arbitrary use of the articles a, an, and the, which do not have parallels in many Indian Languages.

1) Numeral ‘one’ is substituted for indefinite articles:

i) ... one anna worth of camphor. TB (p.25)

ii) It was a one-man business. TB (p.166)

iii) Man then went to god and said, ‘Oh God, you made a mistake by giving me just one stomach.’ TO (p.8)
2) Use of definite article:

i) I always felt shy in the company of the girls. TB (p.75)
   I always feel shy in the company of girls.

ii) The now abandoned Jogwa-basket ... TB (p.118)
   Now abandoned Jogwa-basket ...

iii) Finally the date of the marriage was fixed. TB (p.131)
    Finally marriage date was fixed.

iv) The fathers of my children may be different they are all born of me.
    TO (p.63)
    Fathers of my children may be different they are all born of me.

3) Insertion of articles:
   There are no rules to clearly identify the use of articles. However, they are generally used to refer to specific plural or singular nouns. In Indian English, articles are very commonly overused unnecessarily.

i) He had so generous a heart ... PWB (p.3)

ii) The honour enjoyed by a family was in proportion to the restrictions imposed on the women of the house. PWB (p.5)

iii) They speak a dirty language. PWB (p.121)

4.3.4 Code Switching and Code Mixing

Code switching and Code mixing is a common linguistic phenomenon in societies in which two or more languages are used. It increases our understanding of the nature of
language and of the relationship between the use of language and its functions in the socio-cultural contexts.

In the autobiographies under study, the Indian Dalit writers use the CS and CM strategies to express certain specific function in social interactions. Their characters’ occasionally use various linguistics units i.e. words, phrases and clauses from Marathi/Hindi languages. An attempt is made to list out some remarkable examples of CS and CM from the Indian Dalit autobiographies under study.

A) The Branded

i) ..... you cower in fear like vannis and bammans. (p.6)

ii) I’ll give Laxman five tolas of gold. (p. 132)

iii) You’re not giving us even bhakar-pithale in time. (p. 227)

B) The Outcaste

i) We returned with our jowar bhakari and chutney tied up in dirty rags. (p.1)

ii) The girls played phugadi. (p.2)

iii) The Wani and Brahmin boys played kabbadi. Being marked as Mahars we couldn’t join them. (p.2)

iv) Dare I offer my chutney-bhakari to my teacher? (p.2)

iv) I bought a pedha. (p.20)

C) The Prisons We Broke

i) Stop teaching us this padri knowledge of yours. (p.66)

ii) “Yeskar, today the mamledar sahib is coming.” (p.78)

iii) Then other women would make big jowar bhakris. (p.103)

The bold words in the above examples indicate the strategy of code mixing.
4.3.5 Power and Solidarity

Every language has some way of signaling relationships of power and solidarity where ‘power’ reflects relative superior status, social distance, unfamiliarity, and deference, whereas ‘solidarity’ reflects closeness, familiarity, common experiences and shared intimacies.

The principles of power and solidarity are operative in the memoirs under consideration. The powerful people make use of blessings and curses, whereas the powerless people make use of polite forms of expressions.

A) The Branded

In this autobiography, there are glaring instances where the principles of power and solidarity are operative. The following extracts reveal the difference between the language used by powerful and powerless characters. Let us study some examples:

“At the Latur Railway Station, the policeman asked Dada, ‘Where the hell are you going, Mankya?’ Dada replied, ‘I’m going to my relatives at Jawali.’ The policeman retorted, ‘You bastard, you are telling me a lie. You are going to the Tuljapur Fair by this train. Where are your cronies? Are you going to give me something or shall I take you to the Police station?’ Dada begged, ‘Please don’t, I’m only going to Jawali.’ The policeman questioned him, ‘You bastard, yesterday a purse containing a thousand rupees was picked at the bus-stand, who took it? Somebody from your gang has taken it.’ Dada begged and pleaded piteously and gave the policeman thirty rupees from his pocket. The policeman then said, ‘Alright Mankya, go, but meet me again. You’re trying to get away paying so little, mind you.’ The policeman then let him go.” (p.48)
The above conversation takes place at Latur Railway Station. The Police Constable inquires where Manikdada is going. Demanding the bribe, the police also asks him about the purse containing a thousand rupees which was picked at the bus-stand the day before. Manikdada makes his way to Tuljapur by paying thirty rupees to the police. In this instance, hierarchy and closeness form the relationship. It shows that the police constable has got additional power to that which he already has as a police in the social hierarchy. The ambiguity of closeness is seen in a bribe-paying aspect and meeting again promises in this conversation.

One day after school, Laxman was carrying his father’s ‘bhakar’ by the village path. He saw two police constables approaching him from the Latur side on bicycles. The following extract denotes how power semantics operates in the hierarchal relations.

> “One of the constables grabbed him and asked, ‘Where are you from? Are you from Dhanegaon?’ I said, ‘Yes.’
> ‘What community do you belong to?’
> As soon as I said that I belonged to the Pathruts, the constable slapped me on the face. I pissed in my shorts. I invoked the names of all the gods and silently prayed, ‘O God! Please save me from the police, I have committed no sin. I only said I belonged to the Pathruts and they beat me.’
> Once again the police asked me, ‘Tell us where Narya, Mankya, Bhagwanya are?’ I replied that they were in the village. They asked me, ‘Whose brother are you?’ In panic I blurted out the truth that I was Manikdada’s brother. Instantly the constable gave me a resounding slap on the face. ‘You are the brother of a thief, come with us to the village.’” (p.60)

The conversation between Laxman and the Police constables throws light on the power semantics. Two police constables ask Laxman several questions like ‘Where are you from?’ and ‘What community do you belong to?’. These linguistic expressions
reveal the superior social status of the police constables. They beat Laxman when he tells them that he is from Pathrut community.

B) The Outcaste
In this memoir also, we come across one incident of power semantics.

“Kaka arrived home in the evening. He was furious about the whole affair. He shouted, ‘Sharanya, who have you complained against at the police station? Why the hell did you need to do that? I will smash your head like I would a snake’s.” (p.78)

In the above extract Kaka, the Patil of Hanoor, threatens Sharan for complaining against Shivram at the Police station. The Patil does not like Sharan’s act of complaining. He warns him to smash his head like a snake. Here the power semantics is operative.

In the memoir The Prisons We Broke one does not come across any instance of the use of power and solidarity.

4.3.6 Address Terms and Greetings
There are glaring examples of address terms and greetings in the memoirs written by the Dalit writers. There are peculiar address terms and greetings that are worth studying from the point of view of Sociolinguistics.

A) The Branded
In this memoir, we find many instances of address terms. They are as follows:

“Lakshya, Pathrut boy, has come to school!” (p.34)
The above expression is uttered by the boys in the narrator’s class. The schoolboys’ sneering remarks make Laxman feel humiliated. School going becomes an embarrassing and humiliating experience for young Laxman. The upper caste boys are surprised to see a Pathrut boy (lower caste) coming to school. They address him not only by using diminutive derived from his first name Laxman but also mention the caste he belongs to. This remark focuses on social exclusion and deprivation of Dalit children in the sphere of education. In addition to diminutive address terms, the Dalit writer Laxman Gaikwad profusely use honorific address terms to show Indianness. The bold word in the following example illustrates the fact.

“Karbhari, give us some food.” (p. 46)

‘Karbhar’ is an address term in Marathi which is similar to the term ‘Manager’ or one who looks after matters of business of the chief as well as of the village. Karbhari usually belongs to the upper caste society. The Dalit boys are begging him for food. The expression clearly shows a nature of hegemonic culture between the two communities as a major aspect of social life. The Dalit boys want to show solidarity by using the address term ‘Karbhar’.

In one of the incidents, Sopan-bhauji calls his fellowmen:

“Comrades, only half an hour remains for the departure of the train. All of you from our thieves’ fraternity ....” (p.59)

‘Comrades’ is a term of address used for people engaged in the same movement or profession. This term of address also shows brotherhood and solidarity between the addresser and the addressee.

In the following expression, the police shouts at the narrator:

“Eh, you son of a Pathrut, take us to your hut, come, let us meet Mankya.” (p.61)
The police addresses Laxman as son of a pathrut which clearly shows a speaker’s attitude towards listener. The form of address used by the police indicates the social relationship between him and Laxman in terms of status and social distance. The police being in power, abuses Laxman in the name of his tribe and humiliates him publicly.

The other incident when the narrator goes to school, the uncouth children gather around him and tease him as:

“Here comes a thief! Here comes a Pathrut!” (p.62)

The schoolboys also address Laxman as a thief and a Pathrut. Laxman belongs to Pathrut community, which is known for the unlawful profession of thieving. These insulting and teasing utterances clearly show disrespect and hatred of the schoolboys towards Laxman, the narrator. It also shows how school-going children discriminate and follow the established social order.

It is interesting to study how women folk of Pathrut tribe address each other using diminutives and honorifics. Let us study the following extract:

“The new sister-in-law was very clean and wore a natty make-up. There was a huge difference between the way she spoke and the way we did. Sometimes to help in the household chores she would respectfully asked my elder brother’s wife, ‘Oh Vahinibai, May I accompany you to fetch water?’ All the sisters-in-law would snigger. They had never heard such language in their households. They used to jeer at and make fun of her. Some called her ‘Padme’, but most women addressed her as ‘Nawadi’. So that Nawadi became the commonly used sobriquet to call her by. I, however, always called her ‘Bhabhi’. ...
Everybody in our household called me Laxman or Lakshya. Nawadi, however, always addressed me as "Young Raosab". (p.65)

In the Pathrut community, terms used for addressing someone have an interesting correlation with language and culture. Address terms like ‘Vahinibai’, ‘Padme’, ‘Nawadi’, ‘Bhabhi’ and ‘Young Raosab’ are good and relevant examples of linguistic units which demonstrate how social relationships and the value structures based on these relationships get reflected in the language and in communication etiquettes. The terms ‘Bhabhi’, ‘Padme’, and ‘Nawadi’ used for Padmini, Manikdada’s keep. ‘Bhabhi’ has the influence of accepted traditions of addressing people with kinship terms even though they are not members of their family. The address terms ‘Padme’, and ‘Nawadi’ show how women taunt or insult someone and take an advantage in the social hierarchy to enforce one’s own position in relation to others. ‘Young Raosab’ is an honorific term added to kinship terms of address to show respect.

The coworkers of Laxman also address him using the diminutive as is evident in the following expression:

All the workers called him ‘Barkya’. (p.97)

‘Barkya’ is a Marathi term of address, which means ‘junior’ or ‘little one’. Most of the Marathi speaking people use this term freely to show the solidarity with the addressed person.

‘Manager-saheb, get any amount of work done by your workers, but do not thrash us cruelly.” (p.151)

‘Manager’ is an individual who is in charge of a certain group of tasks, or a certain division of a company. ‘Saheb’ is a Marathi honorific used for showing respect with specific nomenclatures.
The manager spoke “Worker-friends, I don’t want to speak much today.”

(p.151)

‘Worker-friends’ is a literal translation of Marathi address term ‘कामगार भिंतानी’ which means workers are like friends. This term can be associated with communist lingo, but is more commonly used to refer to a co-worker.

In one of the incidents, Babu Rathod, a minor character, warns the upper caste Hindus:

“Malak, don’t you dare assault and debauch the people of our Tanda again.”

(p.202)

‘Malak’ is an address term in Marathi, which means ‘owner or possessor’. Babu Rathod belongs to Laman (a Nomadic Tribe) community addresses the landlord of the village as ‘Malak’.

B) The Outcaste

In this autobiography, distinct address terms are used. The following are some glaring examples:

In one of the incidents, during the school interval, the other boys throw stones at the narrator and tease him as: ‘Mahar!’ (p.6)

The above expression shows that the upper caste schoolboys call their schoolmate, the narrator, not by the name ‘Sharan’ but by his caste ‘Mahar’. This expression shows how schoolboys use forms of address to discriminate in the school.
Sharankumar Limbale, the narrator, would tease all his sisters by calling them with different terms of address. They are as follows:

- Nagubai (Nagi) - ‘mare’ (p.20)
- Nirmala (Nirmi) - ‘flat-nosed’ (p.20)
- Vanmala (Vani) - ‘blackey’ (p.20)
- Sunanda (Sooni) - ‘the lame one’ (p.20)
- Indira - ‘the blind one’ (p.21)

C) The Prisons We Broke

In this memoir, one comes across several address terms, which are worth studying as a part of Sociolinguistics. Let us consider the following examples:

“Appasab, could you please give this despicable Mahar woman ...” (p.13)

The above expression is uttered by a Mahar woman. ‘Appasab’ is one of the most reverential and polite address terms used for the upper caste Hindus. Here, the Mahar woman uses this term for the shopkeeper.

It is also interesting to see how elderly people address the younger ones in the community. Let us study the following extract:

“Boys, now go and fetch Dadu’s Shriranga, Guni’s Sadya, Awa’s Ranya.”

(p.30)

The above example shows the distinct way of addressing observed in the lower caste community. The children are addressed with the names of their parents.
Greetings
There are many ways one can greet another. In Indian Dalit autobiographies, one comes across some terms of greetings. They are as follows:

The Outcaste
In this autobiography, there is a reflection of multiculturalism as there are different religions and castes in the phenomenon of multiculturalism are revealed in India. This is reflected via the use of different ways of greetings.

i) Aale koom salam - a way of greeting among Muslims. (p.31)

ii) Namaskar - a way of greeting among Hindus. (p.104)

iii) Jai Bhim - a way of greeting among Dalits (p.104)

The Prisons We Broke
In this memoir, there is a glaring example in which the address term ‘Johar mai bap’ is used to show deep respect for the addressee.

i) Johar mai bap - The traditional salutation/greeting or ‘salaam’ that the Mahar supposed to offer to the higher caste people. It literally means ‘I salute you as my mother and father.’ (p.78)

4.3.7 Blessings and Curses
Blessing and cursing are the specific expressions affected by cultural and social factors. An attempt is made to analyze some conversations/expressions of blessing and cursing from the selected Dalit Autobiographies:

A) The Branded
In this memoir, there is a glaring expression of blessing in which narrator’s father blesses his son:

“My boy has become very wise. He’ll be a teacher.” (p.34)
The above expression shows that Laxman’s father wishes his son to be a teacher. His utterance demonstrates how pious and edifying language is the genuine produce of a sanctified heart. Laxman’s father like any father wants his child may one day grow up to be a successful person as a teacher. The expression ‘My boy has become very wise’ from the above extract suggests that the father is greatly proud of his son.

B) The Outcaste

In this memoir, one comes across an example of curse. Consider the following short extract:

“If you speak ill about Ambabai, she will make you miserable. You will die of the insects and worms in your body.” (p. 93)

Santamai gets angry with Sharan Limbale, the narrator, when he speaks disbelievingly about the Goddess Ambabai. Santamai’s linguistic impoliteness is clearly seen in the expressions such as ‘If you speak ill about Ambabai, she will make you miserable. You will die of the insects and worms in your body.’ She threatens Sharan for evil or misfortune to befall him. This is the best example of verbal attack with powerfully threatening utterances, which is acceptable in sociocultural situations of the characters.

The Prisons We Broke

One does not across substantial instances of blessings and curses in this autobiography.

4.3.8 Abusive Expressions

Indian Dalit writers are criticized for the use of vulgar and obscene language. Their characters interact with each other in an abusive language. This includes violent verbalization such as ridicules, name-calling, curses, and abusive words and swears. The writers used such a language to highlight the idiosyncrasy of the characters from the Dalit community. The autobiographies under study are crammed with instances of
abusive expressions and use of lewd, ribald and filthy language. Let us see some of the examples from the selected autobiographies one by one.

A) The Branded

There are examples galore of the abusive expressions in the present autobiography. Let us consider the following example:

“Manikya, you bastard, f...k your mother, you cower in fear like vannis and bammans. When caught red handed, you disclose the names of the entire gang! You’ve brought shame upon and besmirched the name of the tribe of thieves.” (p.6)

Santaram and Tukaram curse and abuse Manikdada for disclosing the names of the entire gang after being caught red-handed by the police. The anger that flashes in their words is very evident of the fact that Manik has brought shame upon and besmirched the name of the tribe of thieves. The bold words in the above example are abusive expressions.

The next instance of abusive expression is:

“What sort of village is this! Mother-fuckers! Can’t get even an earthen pot against a metal one! I’ll go to Latur and sell it.” (p.30)

In the above expression, Dada expresses his anger by abusing the villagers as mother-fuckers. The abusive expression ‘mother-fuckers’ is commonly used by the people belonging to the low castes and hence loses its original meaning as an abusive term. This is evident in the following extract:

“Fuck his mother, the bastard, don’t know what Mahar, Mang caste he belongs to! He has polluted the feast by his unholy attendance and come and ate through two-three rounds.” (p.45)
The server at the feast abuses Laxman by using expression such as ‘Fuck his mother, the bastard’. He uses such an offensive language for Laxman because he belongs to the lower caste.

It is observed that not only common people abuse each other but the police officers are also seen abusing the masses. Let us study the following examples:

“**You bastard, you are telling me a lie....**” (p.48)

The policeman uses foul language in an aggressive or intimidating manner to address a person who is a thief. It is not always deemed unacceptable. It shows how the policeman dominates the situation through his linguistic behavior.

“**You, a brat of thieving community! Has your father ever gone to school? Come, now let your schooling be in prison.**” (p.60)

The linguistic expression ‘a brat of thieving community’ is a contemptuous term used for the young Laxman. The word ‘brat’ means illegitimate child or a child begotten outside marriage. The police often uses such a threatening, abusive or insulting language for Pathrut community in this autobiography.

“**You harlot, where did you get such a costly sari? Do you have the cash-memo for this sari?**’ (p.61)

The policeman abuses Laxman’s mother as a harlot. This example shows that while using abusive expressions, the police do not discriminate on the basis of gender.

It is surprising that the women folk also use abusive expressions while conversing with their male counterparts. The following examples illustrate the fact:

“**Bastard! Harlot’s pimp, you lift your dhoti and piss in front of me!”** (p.57)
The above expression throws light on how a woman abuses a man for urinating in front of her. The man’s misconduct at public place arouses the woman to use foul language.

The other example is:

“This bastard’s marriage is nothing but trouble.” (p.135)

In the above expression, Anna’s wife abuses Laxman who is her brother-in-law. It shows even the elderly women in the family abuse the young members of the family.

“Get up you bastard! Fuck your mother! You guzzle and sleep like a buffalo! Who will work? Your father?” (p.149)

The supervisor at the Spinning Mill abuses workers for sleeping in the mill during working hours.

B) The Outcaste

There are several instances of abusive expressions in this memoir, which are worth studying as a part of Sociolinguistics. Let us consider the following italicized expression of the teacher:

“You, son of a bitch, come on, start writing! You like eating an ox, don’t you?” (p.4)

The teacher uses an abusive term ‘son of a bitch’ for Sharan, his student. The teacher expresses his annoyance for the student by using the vernacular word because the student does not obey his orders. The expression ‘son of a bitch’ means an unpleasant, obnoxious or despicable person. The linguistic expression ‘You like eating an ox, don’t you?’ denotes that he is a beef-eater. The slang word occurs because both the people in the conversation know each other very well. Similar abusive expression is used by the police officer in the following example:
“What the hell do you want, you sons of bitches?” (p.77)

The above abusive expression is another example of how high-caste people abuse lower caste people. The police constable uses slang words for Sharan and Parshya.

It is also surprising that the narrator’s kith and kin also abuse him for no obvious reason as is evident in the following example:

“My mother-in-law kept abusing me. She said, ‘You are rotten people. We have purified you. You were lying on the garbage.’” (p.100)

In this autobiography, Sharan’s mother-in-law always speaks with him in bitter language. Her expression ‘You are rotten people’ clearly implies her evil intension of calling Sharan’s family impure and immoral.

C) The Prisons We Broke

Baby Kamble’s characters also use abusive expression profusely. For instance:

“mothers scolded their younger son, ‘You silly good-for-nothing oafs!’” (p.21)

The above expression is a combination of three slang words i.e. ‘silly’, ‘good-for-nothing’ and ‘oaf’. In this autobiography, the mothers of Mahar family use this linguistic expression for their younger son. The in-laws are also seen using abusive expressions to show their anger towards the daughter-in-law.

“The sasra also joined forces with his wife, ‘You bitch, Paru, will you allow us to stay in this village or not?’” (p.53)

The above expression ‘bitch’ is a generalized term of abuse uttered by sasra (Father-in-law) for his daughter-in-law to express his anger towards her. The daughter-in-law often becomes the target of abuse.

“The witch! Wanted to kill the whole family!” (p.96)
The above expression ‘witch’ is used for daughter-in-law in the family. It is a specific instance of abusive form of linguistic violence used to silence and dominate Indian Dalit women.

4.3.9 Honorific Terms

The usage of honorific terms is an important aspect of Sociolinguistics. People use honorific terms in everyday social interaction. Honorific terms are affixes, words, and formulaic phrases. The use of honorific terms reflects a speaker’s politeness toward an addressee.

In Indian Dalit Autobiographies under study, honorific terms are expressed by several linguistic markers, which are language specific and culture specific. These autobiographies are full of terms of respect especially used by lower caste people.

A) The Branded

In this memoir, there are several incidents where the addressers use honorification for his/her addressees. Consider the following examples:

“See Saab, see for yourself, there is nothing in the hut.” (p.2)

In the above expression, the grandfather of the narrator calls the police as Saab, which is an honorific term, used in Hindi language. In modern Indian English, the term also means Master.

“Look Guruji, I’ve taken a bath today, my kargota is wet.” (p.33)

In the above expression, Laxman, the narrator addresses his teacher as Guruji. The term is an honorific term used in Marathi language, which in English means the teacher.

In the present autobiography, some honorific terms formed with different suffixes such as –sahab, -rao and -ji are used as a means of expressing respect/honour. The following examples illustrate the fact:
“Oh Saab, I want to meet Sonavanesahab, I want his endorsement on this application.’ He said, ‘Well, say what it is you want. I’m Sonavane.’ I bowed and touched his feet instantly, and told him, ‘Saheb, I want to work in spinning mill, they won’t take me unless you endorse my application.” (p.96)

The suffix —sahab is a traditional Hindi honorific, which is used by Laxman to address the person who has authority to endorse his application for the job. Another Marathi honorific Saheb is also used. Both the honorifics are derived from Arabic word ‘Sahib.’

“Laxmanrao, you delivered a good speech. We’re afraid of even going near the bosses. You stood near them and delivered a speech. You are very lucky for you’re in their good books.” (p.148)

The above reaction given by fellow-workers tells us that Laxman has improved his social status. People addressed him respectfully by adding Marathi suffix —rao to his first name Laxman. He becomes the man who stands near the bosses and delivers speech.

“Gaikwadji, stop your fasting.” (p.159)

The above expression shows the respect several people have in their mind for Laxman Gaikwad. It clearly represents that Laxman has improved his social status. People addressed him respectfully by adding Marathi suffix —ji to his surname Gaikwad. He becomes the leader of the mill workers.

C) The Prisons We Broke
Some of the honorific terms used in this autobiography are listed below:

i) Mistry : An honorific term for a carpenter or contractor (p.5)

ii) Mamaji – Honorific term for Father-in-law. (p.24)
4.3.10 Kinship Terms

The Dalit community has a distinct pattern of using kinship terms. The elderly people address the younger ones by name; whereas younger persons address the elders by the kinship terms. They mix up the kinship term with the proper name of the person in order to distinguish persons of the same kinship category. The characters in the selected Indian Dalit autobiographies also follow the same pattern. Some of the kinship terms used in the autobiographies under study are listed below:

A) The Branded

i) Dada - The term Dada refers to eldest brother. (p.10)

ii) Anna - The term Anna refers to elder brother. (p.10)

iii) Bhau - The term Bhau refers to elder brother. (p.10)

iv) Chacha - The term Chacha refers to One’s father’s younger brother. (p.26)

v) Ma - Ma is a kinship term in Hindi, which means ‘one’s mother’ in English. (p.29)

vi) Bhabhi - The term Bhabhi refers to Brother’s wife. (p.43)

vii) Vahini - The term Vahini refers to Sister-in-law. (p.54)

viii) Bhauji - The term Bhauji refers to elder sister’s husband. (p.59)

ix) Mama – Maternal uncle (p.116)

x) Akka – Akka is a kinship term in Marathi, which refers to eldest sister. (p.142)
B) The Outcaste

i) Mai – Mother (p.6)

ii) Mama – Maternal uncle (p.17)

iii) Baap – Father (p.23)

iv) Ajja – Grandfather (p.49)

v) Our mother’s husband - Father (p.69)

vi) Aji – Grandmother (p.87)

C) The Prisons We Broke

i) Aai – Mother (p.1)

ii) Mama – Maternal Uncle (p.1)

iii) Mawshi – Maternal Aunt (p.1)

iv) Aaji - Grandmother. (p.1)

v) Chulat aaja - Granduncle.(p.2)

vi) Kaka: Paternal uncle, father’s brother. (p.19)

vii) Kaki: Paternal aunt; also a respectful way of addressing elder women. (p.19)

viii) Mamaji – Father-in-law. (p.24)

ix) Atyabai – Mother-in-law. (p.28)

x) Tatya – Uncle (p.68)

xi) Taisaab - The elder sister (p.79)

xii) Papa – Father (p.121)

xiii) Mummy – Mother (p.121)
4.3.11 Diminutive Expressions

The term ‘diminutive’ derives from Latin dēminuere meaning ‘diminish, decrease, lessen, reduce or impair’. It also relates to dimension, e.g. small size or approximation. Some diminutives also suggest evaluative or expressive and stylistic connotative meaning, e.g. affection, intensification. Thus, diminutives convey affection on the part of the addressers and can express admiring or derogative, or humorous meanings. Some diminutive expressions that occur in the selected Indian Dalit Autobiographies are stated below:

i) Saab - Sahab/Sahib **TB** (p.2)
ii) Lakshya – Laxman **TB** (p.27)
iii) Smt. – Shrimati **TB** (p.93)
iv) Sushi – Sushila **TB** (p.104)
v) Prof. - Professor **TB** (p.178)
vi) Etc. – Et cetera **TO** (p.43)
vii) Mr. – Mister **PWB** (p.40)
viii) Shoo shoo – an expression to drive away a person or animal. **PWB** (p.80)
ix) Baba – Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar **PWB** (p.106)

4.3.12 Unusual Spellings

There are some of the instances of unusual spellings in *The Branded*:

i) Ulonor, Bumonir, Kalpithnor. Kaskonor, Papponor and Ilenor – Names of the clans. **TB** (p.4)

ii) Ma’am – Madam **TB** (p.21)

iii) Ex-parte - Latin legal term which means “from/by/for one party”. **TB** (p.166)
4.3.13 Other Sociolinguistic Features

There are a few glaring examples of other sociolinguistic features such as caste-related words, original Marathi words, Indian location names and animal names.

A) Caste-related Words

i) Kunbi Women TB (P.23)

ii) Laman Tanda TB (P.202)

iii) Maharwada TO (p.5)

iv) Mangwada TO (p.5)

B) Original Marathi Words/Expressions

The selected Indian Dalit autobiographies are the translations of the texts originally written in Marathi language. The translators retained some requisite Marathi words in these autobiographies. Five words from each of the autobiography are given below:

Marathi Words from ‘The Branded’

1. Akshata: Rice smeared with vermillion. It is showered on the
   bridegroom and the bride at the auspicious moment of the marriage
   with the chanting of ritual hymns. (p.135)

2. Bhasma: Sacred ash (p.51)

3. Chool: An improvised fire place, of cooking stones. (p.57)

4. Gondhal: A religious chorus in the name of the Goddess. It is a folk
   song like a ballad. (p.184)

5. Jogwa: Offerings asked from people in the name of God. (p.79)
Marathi Words from ‘The Outcaste’

1. Akkarmashi: impure, incomplete, an illegitimate child. (p.62)
2. Chutney: chillies pounded into a paste with salt and fried. (p.1)
3. Mangalsutra: a talisman the bridegroom ties around the neck of his bride. Sanctified, it ensures his long life. (p.99)
4. Phugadi: a game played mostly by girls. (p.2)
5. Waghya: a male devotee of Yallama, dressed like a female. (p.92)

Marathi Words from ‘The Prisons We Broke’

1. Amawasya: No-moon night. (p.21)
2. Bashinga: Crown of flowers placed on the heads of the bride and the groom. (p.89)
3. Damdi: An old coin, very low in value. (p.3)
4. Gomutra: Cow’s urine, considered to be holy by upper caste Hindus. (p.19)
5. Gulawani: A syrupy dish made from jaggery, traditionally served in festive meals or marriage feasts. (p.76)

C) Indian Location Names

There are several names of the places that occur in the Dalit autobiographies under study. Five names of such places from each autobiography are stated below:

A) The Branded

i) Dhanegaon ........................................ (p.1)
ii) Latur ............................................. (p.1)
iii) Nevli .................................................. (p.5)
iv) Bhargaon .......................................... (p.5)
v) Renapur ............................................. (p.6)

B) The Outcaste

i) Akkalkot .............................................(p.3)
ii) Chungi ...............................................(p.16)
iii) Shirwal .............................................(p.16)
iv) Hanoor .............................................(p.16)
v) Kashi ................................................. (p.18)

C) The Prisons We Broke:

i) Veergaon .......................................... (p.1)
ii) Purander ........................................... (p.1)
iii) Pune ................................................. (p.1)
iv) Kashmir ........................................... (p.2)
v) Phaltan .............................................. (p.3)

D) Animal Names:

In some cultures, pet animals are given human names. We come across such names in Laxman Gaikwad’s *The Branded*. They are as follows:

i) Pilya, Champi, Gulbya – Dogs’ name. TB (p.13)

ii) Maini, Jani – Buffaloes’ name. TB (p.30)
E) Words from other languages

Laxman Gaikwad, in his autobiography *The Branded*, uses some Telugu words which are listed below:

i) Santmuchchar - Santmuchchar is a compound word in Telugu language. Sant means ‘market’ and muchchar means ‘thief.’ Hence Santmuchchar means one who steals from weekly markets or bazaars. **TB**(p.4)

ii) Ulonor, Bumonir, Kalpithnor, Kaskonor, Papponor and Ilenor - These are Telugu words for the clans of Uchalya. **TB** (p.4)

iii) Khistang matne – picking pockets. **TB** (p.10).


vi) Uthewaari – deception by sleight of hand while engaging a person in conversation, e.g. substituting spurious gold for the genuine **TB** (p.10).

F) Transliteration

Transliteration is the conversion of a text from one script to another. We come across several examples of transliteration in the selected Indian Dalit autobiographies. The following examples illustrate the fact:

i) ‘Lachiman Tata khekdyacha curry khata.’ ...................... **T.B.**  
(p.16)

The above expression is a conversion of Marathi script which means ‘Laxman Uncle eats crabs’ curry.’

ii) ‘Uda, Uda, Ambabai.’ .................................**T. B.** (p.27)
‘Ambabai’ is other name of Goddess Mahalaxmi, the Goddess of peace and prosperity. ‘Uda, Uda’ meaning ‘arise’ but used in the sense of an exclamation of ‘praise’ or ‘victory’ is a shout for the Goddess.

iii) Jan-Gan-Man-Adhi-Nayak-Jay-He ………………….. T.B. (p.34)

The above expression is a conversion of National Anthem.

iv) “Pillya chhoo! Champi Chhoo!” ………………….. TB (p.20)

The above expression is an order to dog to go after somebody.

v) “Master, Master tu kewda? Pora palali dhar lawda.” …….. TO (p.6)

The above expression means “Teacher Teacher how big you are? The boys have run away so hold your cock.”

vi) “Jummako chodu teri Amma ko.” …………………..TO (p.32)

The above expression means “Fuck your mother on Friday.”

vii) “Haricha rung pahuni Radha jhali dang.” …………………TO (p.53)

The above expression means “Radha was fascinated the movement she saw Hari, though he was dark.”

viii) “Chang bhale Mari Aai / Chang bhala Laxmi Aai.” ………PWB (p.20)

A ritual chant in the worship of god Khandoba and goddesses Mari Aai and Laxmi Aai.

4.4 Conclusion

The chapter has emphasized the language used by the characters in the selected Indian Dalit autobiographies. It shows the relation between the linguistic patterns and social structures. The variations in language used by the characters have been made clear in the chapter. Indian Dalit writers attempted to present a ‘real life’ as lived from
beginning to end by the characters in their autobiographies. The autobiographers use conversation between the characters to present reality of life. In other words, the realism is expressed through the use of language. As conversation is an important facet of language, the sociological and linguistic aspects of language and dialect are presented through it. The chapter has provided analytical approach to literary texts.