

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The present Chapter aims to provide a summary of the findings in relation to the research questions stated in Chapter I.

5.1 Summary of Findings

From this study, it is possible to locate the Tamil lexical items used in the English conversations of Malaysian Tamils in the domain of friendship. The study also indicates the use of Bahasa Melayu, Chinese, Hindi, and Sanskrit lexical items in the English conversations of the participants of the study.

A summary of the results of the study is presented in the following brief discussion aimed at answering the research questions of the study.

5.1.1 Research Question 1:

What are the Kinds of Tamil Lexical Items Used in the English Spoken by the Malaysian Tamils in the Domain of Friendship?

The participants of this study used Tamil lexical items in their English conversations because they can all understand and speak Tamil (See also 4.2.1). All the three age group of participants used Tamil in the form of sentences, and as individual words and expressions. However, the Tamil sentences were not analysed due to the scope of the study (Refer to 1.4). The number of Tamil lexical items used by each of the age group is as shown in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1: Number of Tamil Words, Expressions, and Idioms Used by the Participants

Age Groups	Words	Expressions	Idioms	Total
10 -20 Years	145	11	-	156
21- 49 Years	154	11	-	165
50 ≥ Years	135	4	3	142
Total	434	26	3	463

Note: Tamil words and expressions and idioms that were repeated were counted individually as separate lexical items. This is because most of the lexical items were used in different situations, and carried different connotations according to the context in which they occur.

5.1.1.1 The Use of Tamil Lexical Items in the 10-20 Year Age Group

The participants code switched to Tamil in the midst of their English conversations with their friends. Some of the Tamil words used by the participants are as shown in Table 5.2:

Table 5.2: Some of the Tamil Words Used by the 10-20 Year Age Group

Some of the Tamil Words used in the 10-20 Year Age Group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rasam (Indian soup), • nethili (anchovy), • pori (crackers), • vadai (Indian snack), 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • periappa (one's father elder brother), • tata (grandfather), • pathi (grandmother), • mama (uncle),

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appalam (Indian crackers), • urundai (Indian snack), • kari (gravy), • laddu (Indian candy), • payasam (Indian sweet porridge), • koil (temple), • sami (priest/God), • maalai (garland), • sangitham (Indian music), • ama-va? (Is that so?), • enna (what), • enge (where), • Leena, Sheela, Babu, Hema (names of Tamil people). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poda (go away (male)), • podu (go away (female)), • kaluthai (donkey), • kōthān (owl), • paei (devil), • dei (hey), • mayiru (hair - used with various connotations), • maccan (brother-in-law - used with various connotations), • mama (uncle- used with various connotations), • mami (old lady), • Kushboo (name of a film star).
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The participants of the 10-20 Year Age Group used Tamil lexical items in their English conversations with their friends even though some of them were not very fluent in the Tamil language. This is because many of the participants wanted to indicate their closeness and solidarity. Also, many of the participants used words like "maccan" frequently because their friends also used the word. Thus, in order to show group identity, the participants used Tamil words that their friends frequently use.

Besides Tamil words, the participants also used Tamil expressions in the form of collocations in their English conversation with their friends. The Tamil expressions used by the participants are as shown in Table 5.3:

Table 5.3: Tamil Expressions Used by the 10-20 Year Age Group

Tamil Expressions used in the 10-20 Year Age Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sonia,sonia, sokka vaikkum Sonia... (Sonia, Sonia intoxicating Sonia), • sorrie naai (infested dog), • sariyana kanjan (very stingy person), • Ada Kadavule (Oh God), • Aiyo, aiyo amma! (Oh, oh mother!), • Pathu po (Go carefully), • sariyana lollupudichavan da (a very irritating person), • Ada poda (Hey, go away (male)).

The participants of this age group used Tamil expressions such as "**Ada Kadavule**" (Oh God), and "**Aiyo, aiyo amma!**" (Oh, oh mother!) in order to express surprise and to attract attention from their friends. This group of participants also sang lyrics of popular Tamil songs in order to get attention from their friends, by using the lyrics from the Tamil songs that their friends sing or use. This age group also used coined words such as "**takkar**" and "**paikka**" as group identity markers, and as a means to strengthen their solidarity. The next section will discuss the Tamil lexical items used in the 21-49 Year Age Group.

5.1.1.2 The Use of Tamil Lexical Items in the 21-49 Year Age Group

The participants of this group also used Tamil in the form of words and expressions in the form of collocations in their English conversations with their friends. Some of the words used are as shown in Table 5.4:

Table 5.4: Some of the Tamil Words Used by the 21-49 Year Age Group

Some of the Tamil words used by the 21- 49 Year Age Group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • crachi (meat), • marakari (vegetables), • murunge (a kind of vegetable), • idli, tosai, rava, (kinds of Indian snack), • ladugu (mustard), • mochakottae (a kind of lentils), • vengayam (onions), • manjal (saffron), • uppu (salt), • meen talai (fish head), • Deepavali, Ponggal (Hindu festivals), • Muiandy Sami, Letchumy, Vidya Letchumy (Hindu Gods and Goddesses), • Murugan temple (God Murugan's temple), • tirinur (holy ash), • palli (lizard), • swami-(priest), • thevaram (Hindu hymns). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letchumy Dhyana Mandram (Association for the Goddess Letchumy), • maccan (brother-in-law), • tambi (younger brother), • suduthanni (hot water), • periappa (one's father's elder brother), • anni (sister-in-law), • periamma (one's mother's elder sister), • akka (elder sister), • mamiya (mother-in-law), • Kallar, Parayar, Gounder (types of castes), • talikkiran (sauté), • pannanum (must (do)), • enna (what), • ethna (how many), • appuram (then), • Letchumy, Mahadewi, Baskaran, Meenakshi, Ravindran (names of Tamil people).

Just like the 10-20 Year Age Group, the participant of the 21-49 Year Age Group also code switched to Tamil in their English conversations. They code switched to Tamil mainly to fill in lexical gaps in English, and to express specific meanings and connotations. The informal nature of the context of the conversations that is the friendship domain, is also another reason why the participants code switched to Tamil during their English conversations. Also, the participants are all Tamils who could understand the Tamil language, and as such the participants used Tamil words in their English conversations (Refer to 4.1).

Besides Tamil words, the participants also code switched to Tamil expressions during their English conversations. The Tamil expressions used are as shown in Table 5.5:

Table 5.5: Tamil Expressions Used by the 21-49 Year Age Group

Tamil Expressions used by the 21- 49 Year Age Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ma-niram (not very dark), • kāthā kāri (very dark), • Ada / Aiyo Kadavule (Oh God), • sariyana nari (as cunning as a fox), • sariyana pasivere (very hungry), • nalaikku pappom (see you tomorrow), • enna mayirukku (for what hair), • sinna pillae (small girl), • Kanmaniye, enge poyirunthinge? (Darling/shine/"pupil" of my eye, where have you been?).

Just like the younger group of participants of this study, the participants of the 21-49 Year Age Group also used Tamil expressions such as "**Ada / Aiyo Kadavule**" (Oh God) to express surprise. On the whole, the participants of the 21-49 Year Age Group used Tamil words and expressions, amongst others, for solidarity, and to express meanings of specific Tamil words pertaining to the Hindu religion, and Tamil culture (Refer to Chapter IV).

5.1.1.3 The Use of Tamil Lexical Items in the 50 ≥ Year Age Group

The participants in the 50 ≥ Year Age Group used Tamil lexical items in the form of single words, expressions in the form of collocations, and idioms. Some of the Tamil words used by the participants are as shown in Table 5.6:

Table 5.6: Some of the Tamil Words Used by the 50 ≥ Year Age Group

Some of the Tamil Words Used by the 50 ≥ Year Age Group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Navarathiri, Thiru Kalyanam, Kantha Shasthi (kinds of Hindu religious festivals), • Vinayagar Temple (Temple of God Vinyagar), Mariamman Temple (Temple of Goddess Mariamman), • Kavadi (Hindu chariot), • pu (flowers), • manjal (saffron), • mrithangam (Indian musical instrument), 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poojai (prayer), • appa (father), • amma (mother), • pathi (grandmother), • periappa (one's father's elder brother), • vanakkam (hello), • vange (come), • enge (where), • enna (what), • appuram (then), • ethana (how many),

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ompathu (nine), • anju (five), • munu (three), • kōli (chicken). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • karuvadu (salted fish), • Om Namashivaya, Ramesh, Baskaran, Mariamma (Names of Tamil people).
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The participants of this age group used Tamil words to fill in the lexical gap in the English language and to express specific Tamil meanings and connotations.

The use of Tamil in the English conversations of the participants also helped in enhancing the solidarity of the participants.

Besides the use of Tamil words, the participants also used Tamil expressions in the form of collocations, and idioms. The expressions and idioms used by the participants are as shown in Table 5.7:

Table 5.7: Tamil Expressions Used by the 50 ≥ Year Age Group

Tamil Expressions used by the Participants	Tamil Idioms used by the Participants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poittu varom (we are leaving), • appuram pappom (see you later), • sari vange (Okay, come let's go). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theiva vakku (God's words), • Panam iruntha tha-n pathum saiyum (Money can do anything).

Besides the use of Tamil expressions such as "**poittu varom**" (we are leaving), and "**appuram pappom**" (see you later), the participants of this age group also used Tamil idioms in their English conversation with their friends. As compared to the other age groups, the participants of the 50 ≥ Year Age Group placed much importance on the use of culturally appropriate terms and expressions. For example, the participants used the Tamil expressions such as "**poittu varom**" (we are leaving), and "**appuram pappom**" (see you later) when saying farewell to their

friends (Refer to 4.4.12.1). This trend is different from the other two groups of participants of the study. The other age groups used English terms like "Okay" and "Goodbye" to say farewell to their friends. This may be due to Westernization and influence from their other Malaysian friends such as the Malays and Chinese.

The use of Tamil idioms by the participants indicates the deep attachment that some of the participants of this age group have on the Tamil culture. The other two age groups of this study did not use any Tamil idioms in their English conversations. This shows that the older group of Malaysian Tamils of this study still practise the traditional Tamil way of talking, which places much importance on the use of idioms. The use of idioms also reflect the mental make up of the participants of this age group, whereby they still seem to think in the Tamil cultural way of life even though they speak in English (Refer to 4.4.12.2). The next section will discuss the issues related to the second research question of this study.

5.1.2 Research Question 2:

Why are Different Categories of Tamil Lexical items Used in the English Spoken by the Malaysian Tamils in the domain of Friendship?

The participants of the study used Tamil lexical items in the form of single words, expressions in the form of collocations, and idioms in their English conversation with their friends. These categories of Tamil lexical items were used for various reasons as discussed in Chapter IV. The categories of Tamil lexical items used in the different age group are briefly discussed in the following sections.

5.1.2.1 Categories of Tamil Lexical Items in the 10-20 Year Age Group

The categories of Tamil lexical items used in the English conversations of the

10-20 Year Age Group are:

- Indian and Tamil food,
- Hindu Religious Terms,
- Indian Musical Terms,
- Kinship Terms,
- Mock Vulgar Terms,
- Kinship Terms used as Nicknames,
- Coined Words,
- Question Words,
- Tamil Names,
- Expressions of Dissatisfaction,
- Tamil Songs,
- Expressions of Irritation,
- Expressions of Surprise,
- Attention Seeking,
- Warning and Advice,
- Complains.

The analysis of the data helped the researcher to group the Tamil lexical items used by the 10-20 Year Age Group to various groups according to the categories in which the words and expressions are used. The participants of the 10-20 Years Age Group code switched to Tamil lexical items in various forms in their English conversation with their friends for many reasons such as to mention Hindu religious

and cultural terms. Besides that, the participants also used Tamil words to mention kinship terms and nicknames (Refer to 4.2.1.1.4 and 4.2.1.1.5). The participants also expressed various emotions such as dissatisfaction and surprise by using Tamil words. This group of participants also sang lyrics of popular Tamil songs and also used expressions such as "**Aiyo,aiyo amma!**" (Oh, oh mother!) to attract their friends' attention. This group also used coined words such as "**takkar**" and "**paikka**" in their English conversations, amongst others, in order to be "cool" like their friends and also to show their friends that they know the latest words and expressions from the Tamil movies (See Also 4.2.1.1.8).

5.1.2.2 Categories of Tamil Lexical Items in the 21-49 Year Age Group

The participants of this group also used different categories of Tamil words and expressions in their English conversation with their friends. The categories used are as shown:

- Indian and Tamil Food,
- Hindu Festivals, Gods, Religious words, Taboo words, and Hindu Associations,
- Nicknames,
- Kinship Terms,
- Mock Insults,
- Caste,
- Skin Tones,
- Processes,
- Question Words,
- Expressions of Surprise,

- Description of People,
- Expressions of Hunger,
- Expressions of Farewell,
- Vulgar Words,
- Comparison of Age,
- Teasing People,
- Tamil Names.

The participants of the 21-49 Year Age Group used various Tamil words and expressions, for various reasons such as to mention names of Indian and Tamil food. The participants of this age group also discussed the issue of vegetarianism by using Tamil lexical items because many Malaysian Tamils are now becoming vegetarians both for religious as well as health reasons (Refer to Conversation 9, and 4.3.1.1.1). Tamil words like "saivam", "assaivam", and "marakari" have added semantic meanings that cannot be expressed in English. Unlike the younger age group, the participants of this age group discussed serious and sensitive issues such as the skin tones of friends and caste by using Tamil (Refer to 4.3.1.1.6.1 and 4.3.1.8).

On the whole, the use of Tamil lexical items by the participants of this age group helped them in enhancing the solidarity among their friends. The participants also used Tamil lexical items in order to adhere to the social convention of the Tamils. By using Tamil lexical items the participants were able to, amongst others take leave from their friends, and tease a lady friend in a proper way according to the Tamil social convention. For example, a participant in Conversation 22 teased his lady friend in an interesting but careful way by saying "**Kanmaniye, enge poyirunthingae?**" (Darling, where have you been?). The participant tactfully used

the honorific term "ngae" at the end of his question. In this way, his teasing has a pleasing and formal connotation, and at the same time he did not want to hurt his lady friend's feeling by being too bold (Refer to 4.3.2.7).

5.1.2.3 Categories of Tamil Lexical Items in the $50 \geq$ Year Age Group

The participants in the $50 \geq$ Year Age Group used Tamil lexical items in the form of single words, expressions in the form of collocations, and idioms according to different categories. The different categories are as shown below:

- Hindu Religious, Traditional, and Cultural Words and Items,
- Kinship Terms,
- Greetings,
- Indian Musical Instruments,
- Numbers,
- Colours,
- Animals,
- Nicknames,
- Tamil Names,
- Question Words,
- Farewells,
- Idioms.

Just like the other two age groups, the participants of this age group also used Tamil to mention Hindu temples, festivals and other religious terms in their English conversations (Refer to 4.4.1.1 and 4.4.1.1.2). This age group of participants also placed much importance on the use of honorific terms (Refer to 4.4.3). The

researcher found that there are at least four different ways in which the participants of this study used honorific terms to their friends. The three different ways are as shown below:

- honorific terms used among friends of the same sex,
- honorific terms used by a male to a female friend,
- honorific terms used to a person who is younger than oneself.
- honorific terms used to a person who is older than oneself.

This trend is not found in the other two groups probably because the participants in the groups are younger than the participants of the $50 \geq$ Year Age Group. Also many of the participants in the younger groups consider the use of mock insults and vulgarities as a way of expressing their solidarity and closeness to their friends (Refer to 4.2.1.1.6 and 4.3.1.6).

Some of the participants of the $50 \geq$ Year Age Group also feel that Tamil words should only be used where necessary and that one should not "overdo it". For example, one participant in Interview 4 felt that culturally loaded words such as "amma" (mother) should be mentioned in Tamil (Refer to Interview 4).

The use of Tamil idioms by the participants of this age group reflect the mental make up and the Tamil way of thinking of the participants of this age group. Being the older group, this age group of participants are able to put into practise the various Tamil culture and Tamil values which are taken lightly or forgotten by the younger age group of participants of this study.

5.1.3 Comparison of the Categories of Tamil Lexical Items

Both the Tamil-primary school educated and the non-Tamil primary school educated participants of this study used Tamil lexical items in various forms such as single words, expressions in the form of collocations, and idioms in their English conversations with their friends, as shown in Table 5.8:

Table 5.8: Categories of Tamil Lexical Items in the Participants' English Conversations

Categories of Tamil Lexical Items	10-20 Year Age Group	21-49 Year Age Group	50 ≥ Year Age Group
Food	/	/	/
Religion	/	/	/
Tamil Names	/	/	/
Taboo Words	X	/	X
Nicknames	/	/	/
Kinship Terms	/	/	/
Mock Insults	/	/	X
Coined Words	/	X	X
Skin colour	X	/	X
Process	X	/	X
Question Words	/	/	/
Dissatisfaction	/	X	X
Tamil Songs	/	X	X
Complains	/	X	X
Irritation	/	X	X
Surprise	/	/	X

Attention Seeking	/	X	X
Warning	/	X	X
Description - People	X	/	X
Expressions-Hunger	X	/	X
Farewell	X	/	/
Age	X	/	X
Teasing	X	/	X
Greetings	X	X	/
Musical Terms	/	/	X
Numbers	X	X	/
Colours	X	X	/
Animals	/	X	/
Idioms	X	X	/

Note:

- (/) indicates that the age group use the mentioned categories of Tamil lexical items in their English conversations.
- (X) indicates that the age group did not use the mentioned categories of Tamil lexical items in their English conversations.

Some categories of Tamil lexical items such as terms related to the Hindu religion and culture, Tamil food, and Tamil names are used by all the age groups. The participants used Tamil lexical items to express terms related to the Hindu religion and culture in their English conversations because they have similar cultural and religious background. Also there are no specific terms in English to mention

Hindu religious and cultural words such as "**Muniandi Sami**" (Muniandi God), "**Sangabhishegam**" (Prayer using seashells) and "**karma**" (Hinduism law of cause and effect). Expressions of emotions such as surprise are mentioned in Tamil by all the age groups because of the added meanings that the expressions have in Tamil. For example, the popular Tamil expression "**Aiyo/Ada Kadavule!**" (Oh God!) refers to the one and only omnipotent God of Hinduism and not the minor Hindu Gods such as "**Muniandi Sami**" (Muniandi God). (Refer to 4.3.1.5 and 4.4.2).

All the three age groups also mentioned kinship terms and nicknames in their English conversation with friends. The participants also used Tamil lexical items in order to fill in the lexical gap in the English language. All the age groups of this study used kinship terms to mention relations such as "**mama**" (uncle), "**periamma**" (one's mother's elder sister), and "**periappa**" (one's father's elder brother) (Refer to 4.2.1.1.4, 4.3.1.5 and 4.4.2). This is because there are no specific words in English to mention words like "**periamma**" (one's mother's elder sister), and "**periappa**" (one's father's elder brother). Also, all the three age groups used nicknames in their conversation with their friends. The participants used Tamil nicknames such as "**Maccan**" "**Tambi**" and "**Karuvadu**" for various reasons. For example, the 10-20 Year Age Group used nicknames as an indication of solidarity. The 50 ≥ Year Age Group used "**karuvadu**" (salted fish) as a friend's nickname as an indication of closeness and solidarity. The researcher found out that "**Karuvadu**" (Salted Fish) got his nickname because he was extremely thin, and also "**Karuvadu**" (Salted Fish) doesn't mind being called as such in name. This is because they have been friends since young. In fact, the use of nicknames helped in enhancing the solidarity of all the friends in the study. All the three age groups also used Tamil question words in their English conversation with their friends. Most of

the question words were used to get clarification regarding the issues in discussion (Refer to 4.2.1.1.9).

On the whole, the three different age groups of participants of this study used different categories of Tamil lexical items in their English conversations for a number of reasons as shown:

- The 10-20 Year Age Group

The 10-20 Year Age Group of participants used Tamil lexical items in their English conversations as an indication of solidarity and for peer group identity. This is because all the friends were Tamils and because of this they code switched to Tamil in their English conversations to show their friends that they too can speak Tamil. This age group also used words like "maccan" (brother-in-law) to their friends even though they were not related (Refer to 4.2.1.1.6). This age group also used coined words such as "takkar", and "paikka" in order to show their friends that they too know the latest coined words from Tamil movies (Refer to 4.2.1.1.8). In addition, this age group also sang lyrics of popular Tamil songs and used mock insults to attract the attention of their friends (Refer to 4.2.1.1.6, 4.2.2.1, and 4.2.2.2). These Tamil words and expressions also act as group identity markers to the participants in this age group.

- The 21-49 Year Age Group

The participants of this age group used Tamil lexical items to fill in the lexical gap in English when expressing Hindu religious terms, and other Tamil cultural words. Tamil was also used when the participants wanted to express added meanings and connotations. The participants also used Tamil when discussing sensitive matters like caste and skin colour (Refer to 4.3.1.7 and 4.3.1.8). The use of

Tamil lexical items by this age group also reflect the mental make up of the participants in which the Tamil culture is important. The use of Tamil lexical items in the English conversation of the participants of the 21-49 Year Age Group also enhanced the solidarity of the friends.

- The 50 ≥ Year Age Group

Just like the other age group of participants of this study, the participants of the 50 ≥ Year Age Group also used Tamil lexical items in the form of single words, and expressions in the form of collocations, and also idioms in their English conversations with their friends. The Tamil lexical items helped in enhancing their solidarity. The Tamil idioms used by the participants of this age group also reflect the mental make up and way of thinking of the participants. For example, "**Panam iruntha tha-n pattu-m pesum**" (Money can do anything) is a popular Tamil idiom which was used by the participants. This idiom reflects the Tamil way of viewing the value of money (Refer to 4.4.12.2). On the whole, the participants of this age group used Tamil lexical items for solidarity and as a way of keeping in touch with the Tamil culture and tradition.

5.1.4 Research Question 3:

What is the Influence of the Tamil Lexical Items Used in the English Spoken by the Participants of this Study?

Since all the participant of this study are multilinguals who know at least three languages, they used Tamil lexical items in their English conversations with their friends. Some of the participants who were interviewed said that the use of Tamil lexical items help them in sharing intimate issues and secrets with other Tamil

friends (Refer to Interview 2). Others mentioned that they use Tamil lexical items because of the priority that they have for the Tamil language (See Interview 3). The participants also use Tamil lexical items in their English conversations as an indication of closeness and friendliness among the friends.

The informal nature of the English conversations of the participants also prompted them to use code switching and other forms of linguistic elements such as borrowing in the English conversations with their friends. This phenomenon helps the participants in expressing Tamil social, cultural, and religious specific meanings and connotations in their English conversations with their friends. Linguistic elements like code switching and borrowing also help the participants to establish group identity as fellow Malaysian Tamils who share the same social and cultural values. Thus, this shows that the participants use linguistic elements such as code switching, and borrowing in order to communicate more effectively with their friends. In this way, the participants also are able to convey meanings more effectively. The use of linguistic elements such as code switching and borrowing also help the participants to strengthen their solidarity as fellow Tamils. For example, the 10-20 Year Age Group of participants used the Tamil word "**maccan**" (brother-in-law) as a way of establishing solidarity among their friends (Refer to 4.2.1.1.5). The participants of this age group also use Tamil lexical items as group identity makers. For example, they use names of movie stars to tease their friends and to show their friends that they too know the latest movie stars, Tamil songs, and other coined words used in their group (Refer to 4.2.1.1.8. and 4.2.2.2).

The presence of Tamil lexical items in the participants English conversations also help us to understand the language choice made by the participants in expressing themselves. For example, many Tamil lexical items pertaining to the

expressing themselves. For example, many Tamil lexical items pertaining to the Tamil way of life, religion, culture, and food are found in the participants' conversations. By analysing the types of Tamil lexical items used in the participants' English conversations, we find that "Hinduism" has much influence in the way a Hindu Malaysian thinks and acts. For example, the use of the word "**karma**", and the way the participants say farewell to their friends, indicate that the participants' approach towards certain issues in life is influenced by the Hindu religion (Refer to 4.3.2.4 and 4.4.12.1). The concept of "sin" and "good deed" is indicated by the connotations carried by Tamil and Sanskrit words such as "**punyam**", "**karma**", and "**dhosyam**" (Refer to 4.5.1). This phenomenon indicates that even though the participants use English to communicate with their friends, certain finer details pertaining to the Hindu religion, culture and way of life, are best expressed in Tamil because there are no specific terms in English to impart such connotations. The use of Tamil lexical items in the participants' English conversations also indicates the participants' approach to life in general. This is because even though the participants talk in English, their mental make up is still in Tamil. In many ways, the use of certain words in Tamil, exemplify this way of thinking. For example, items related to the Hindu culture such as "**pu**" (flower), "**manjal**" (saffron), and "**malai**" (garland) indicate how the participants of this study play a dual role while speaking English to their friends. At the surface level, we find that the participants are speaking in English to their friends. However, at the same time the participants also assert their Hindu way of life and thinking, through the use of culturally loaded Tamil words and expressions (Refer to 4.3.1.1.1 and 4.3.1.10).

The analysis of the use of the Tamil lexical items also helped in defining the social hierarchy and relationships found in the Malaysian Tamil society. By using

certain Tamil lexical items, such as Tamil honorific terms and Tamil kinship terms, the participants were able to function effectively in their domain of friendship, by using the appropriate terms to the appropriate person, at the appropriate time (Refer to 4.4.2 and 4.4.3). The participants were also able to fill in the lexical gap in English by using Tamil lexical items in their English conversations. In fact, the use of Tamil lexical items helped in enhancing the participants' English conversations because the Tamil lexical items help in conveying the finer Tamil social and cultural connotations, which cannot be expressed in English. Thus, in this way the participants' English conversations become more meaningful and satisfying because they are able to communicate more effectively with their friends.

Much misunderstanding could happen if the participants of the study speak totally in English with their friends. For example, much confusion can happen if the participants try to Anglicize names of typical Tamil food. For example, one participant in the 10-20 Year Age Group mentioned "**vadai**" (a kind of Tamil snack that looks like doughnut) as "Indian doughnut" to his friends. This caused confusion because the participant's friend did not understand the Anglicized version of "**vadai**" (Indian doughnut) (Refer to Conversation 2). Thus, the use of Tamil lexical items in the participants' English conversations actually help in conveying specific meanings and enrich the participants' English conversations.

The Tamil lexical items used in the English conversations of the participants also helped in strengthening the solidarity and ethnic identity of the Tamils of this study. For example, many Tamil culture specific words and expressions were used in the English conversations of the participants. These words help in creating a sense of "commonness" and ethnic identity among the friends. For example, a participant in Interview 3 said that she usually start using Tamil after speaking a few lines in

English with her friends. The participant calls this the "Tamil sentiment" whereby she "automatically" or subconsciously starts speaking in Tamil when she meets a Tamil friend (Refer to Interview 3). In Conversation 9, this Tamil sentiment is reflected when the participants in the conversation define themselves as "Malaysian Indians" and not "India Indians". Thus, this shows that the participants of this study are aware of their ethnic identity as Malaysian Tamils and are actually proud of using Tamil in their English conversations. In fact, Tamil lexical items used in the participants' conversations actually help in strengthening the solidarity of the friends as Malaysian Tamils.

The presence of Tamil lexical items in the English conversations of the participants, also indicate that Malaysian Tamils speak the "sub-variety of Malaysian English" which can be termed as "Malaysian-Tamil English". This is because in addition to Tamil lexical items, the participants also used words and expressions from Malaysian English during their English conversation with their friends (Refer to 4.5.5). Lee Su Kim (1987:11) explains that the use of Malaysian English help in creating the "mood" of Malaysianess. In the case of the participants, the use of Tamil lexical items and Malaysian English words and expressions help in creating the "mood" of "Malaysian Tamilness". (Refer to Interview 1 and Interview 3).

5.1.4.1 Bahasa Melayu, Sanskrit, Hindi and Chinese Lexical Items

Besides using Tamils lexical items, the participants also used words and expressions from Bahasa Melayu, Sanskrit, Hindi, and from the Chinese dialects in their English conversations, for various reasons as discussed in Chapter IV (Refer to 4.5.1, 4.5.2, 4.5.3, 4.5.4, and 4.5.5). The informal interviews indicated that the participants use these words and expressions "subconsciously" during their English

conversations with their friends. A participant in Interview 3 explained that she tend to use lexical items from other languages such as Bahasa Melayu in her English conversation with her friends because the lexical items comes out "automatically" during her conversation with friends (See Interview 3). The participants also probably used these words because they were comfortable with the words and expressions. The domain of friendship, in which the participants were in, also allowed them to use freely, lexical items from Bahasa Melayu, Sanskrit, Hindi, Chinese, and from "Malaysian English" in their English conversations. Many of these words and expressions also helped in enhancing the solidarity of the friends in this study. A participant in Interview 2 mentioned that he experiences a sense of personal satisfaction because he and his Tamil friends can understand each other better when they use lexical items from other languages such as Tamil, Bahasa Melayu and Chinese (Refer to Interview 2). In fact, the use of these lexical items need not be viewed as "errors" because these lexical items help the participants to express specific meanings and connotations, while speaking in English to their friends. This phenomenon actually helps in enriching the quality of the English conversation of the participants because they can express meanings better.

5.2 Conclusion

The study has shown that there is mother tongue Tamil influence in the English spoken by Malaysian Tamils in the domain of friendship. The main reason as to why Tamil lexical items are used in the English spoken by Malaysian Tamils in the domain of friendship, is cited as "it comes automatically" when one is speaking to a fellow Tamil friend or friends (Refer to Interview 2). However, there are various

other reasons as to why Tamil lexical items are used in their conversations (Refer to Chapter IV).

The study has also highlighted that in their interaction between friends, Malaysian Tamils also use Bahasa Melayu and a smattering of Chinese, Hindi, and Sanskrit lexical items. In fact, these lexical items serve as a rich and diverse form of cultural and conventional expressions that aid in the communication process between the English-speaking Malaysian Tamils in the domain of friendship.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Research

In view of the limitation of the study (See 1.4), it is recommended that further research be conducted on other areas of interaction of English-speaking Malaysian Tamils. Studies can also be done on the issues of literal translation of Tamil lexical items into English and vice-versa. Such studies will help us get a clearer picture of the linguistic behaviour and linguistic adaptation of the English-speaking Tamils in Malaysia.