CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This research is meant for the study of pronouns in the present day Malaysian Spoken Tamil. In order to make an adequate study on pronouns one has to divide it into two parts namely study of the structure of pronouns and secondly study of the use of Tamil pronouns. While doing so the investigator has to correlate the structure with their distribution of the use. So it is necessary to have fairly adequate data in order to identify the pronouns in different structures of Malaysian Spoken Tamil description and then to explain the use of the pronouns in different contexts. So, the investigator has to depend upon not only her expertise in these areas of linguistic description as a native speaker but also to collect fairly adequate data making use of socio linguistic (research) field techniques. Hence, the methodology is divided into three sections which are related to one another.

They are:

1. Choosing the main research methods and approaches for the study

2. Field study and collection of the required data

3. Organization and processing of the data collected for the actual analysis by applying the chosen research methods.

3.1 The Research Methodology

This research study focuses on both the description of pronouns on the one hand and that of the use of pronouns on the other hand. Both these have to be related with one another in order to condition the occurrence of pronoun forms in linguistic as well as social contexts. So, the following two methods have been chosen to analyse the data and accomplish the research work undertaken. The methods chosen are:

The Descriptive Structural Linguistic Methodology

By applying this methodology it is possible to make a descriptive study to present the structure of pronouns in the Malaysian Spoken Tamil. This kind of study will present pronouns found in the morphological structure as well as syntactic structure of spoken Tamil and in addition the occurrence of pronouns in discourses. The sociolinguistic study will be used to condition the occurrence of pronoun forms and their termination suffixes, etc, which occur with verbs, adjectives, etc. These two methods were chosen to analyse the data to achieve the goals and objectives of this research study.

3.1.1 Data for Research

1. Field Work and Data Collection

The present research work heavily depends upon genuine and fairly adequate data needed for the analysis. The investigator has to conduct field work to elicit the kind of data needed. Field methods include prerequisites like selection of informants, questionnaire needed for the data collection and questionnaire administration methods and the actual data collection process.

2. Sample of Informants:

No/ Age/ Gender	Male	Female	Total
i. Age 16-25 years	10 males (5 higher education) (5 school education)	10 females (5 higher education) (5 school education)	20
ii. Age 26-45 years	10 males (5 higher education) (5 school education)	10 females(5 higher education) (5 school education)	20
iii. Age 46-60 years	10 males (5 higher education) (5 school education)	10 females(5 higher education) (5 school education)	20
Total	30	30	60

To make the data collection more purposeful and successful, the investigator conducted data elicitation interviews directly with the selected respondents by administrating the questionnaires made.

During the interviews questions were administered using the bilingual media use of Tamil and English. The investigator was careful in not mentioning the exact forms in Tamil needed for her research during the interviews. By this way she was able to avoid imitation process. Sometimes the investigator has to give the equivalent English expressions such as lexical items, some of the phrases and sentences in order to elicit the spoken Tamil usages. The researcher was able to make good rapport with the respondents and thereby she got their cooperation which helped in the elicitation of the required data without much difficulty and in a more natural setting. So, the respondents were finally cooperative and helpful in the process of data collection. The researcher also recorded the data meant for this study of structure of pronouns as well as use of pronouns in the form of phrases, sentences and brief discourses. The researcher also voice recorded the data using a voice recorder.

3.2 Data Processing

Though the researcher was able to collect and gather the required and relevant data for this study of pronouns in Malaysian Spoken Tamil she has to process the data in such a way they become fit for the analysis by applying techniques and methods selected for this analysis. The processing was done as follows:

1. Different kinds of Pronouns found in Malaysian Spoken Tamil
2. Pronouns has simple lexical items

3. Occurrence of pronouns in noun phrases

4. Occurrence of pronouns in verb phrases

5. Occurrence of pronouns in verb phrases and alternants in sentences and simple discourses

6. The contextual use of pronouns in some of the identified contexts

7. Free variation of pronouns in structure and use

3.3. Application of Methodology to the processed data

By applying the structural methodology it is possible to identify all the pronoun forms, pronouns in morphological structures, pronouns in phrases occurrences of pronouns as, subject, subject- predicate agreement of pronouns, and the use of pronouns in different social contexts.

By applying the sociolinguistic methodology the processed data were analyzed to present the sociolinguistic significance of language use by correlating the structure of language on the one hand and that of the use of language on the other hand.