

**LANGUAGE SHIFT AND MAINTENANCE AMONG THE
TELUGU COMMUNITY IN THE KLANG VALLEY**

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**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS
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ABSTRACT

The Telugu language is an Indian language commonly spoken in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Yanam. It is listed as the 15th the largest language in the world and known as the third most widely spoken language after Hindi and Bengali in India. Despite having a substantial number of speakers worldwide, in Malaysia the Telugu community who speaks this language is a sub-minority group of Indians which comprises only about 2.4 % of the total Indian population. The purpose of this study is to find out if the Telugu community in Klang Valley is still maintaining or has shifted/is shifting away to another language. Thus, this study aims to answer 3 research questions, which are to find out the language choice of the Telugu community in Klang Valley in domains such as home, social, entertainment, official and religious. Besides, it aims to investigate if there are any differences in language choice between the younger and older generation and finally it examines the main reasons for language maintenance or shift in the community. This study uses both quantitative and qualitative approach. A quantitative approach is conducted on 100 Telugu participants who reside in Klang Valley to obtain statistical information. To further strengthen the findings, interviews were carried out with 10 participants. The interviews focus on the reasons behind language maintenance and shift among the Telugu community in Klang Valley. The findings show that the Telugu language is slowly shifting away mainly to English among the younger generation as English is viewed to be very important for educational, economical and career advancement. However, steps for language revival have been taken by Telugu Association of Malaysia (TAM) and it's slowly being revived among the younger generation. As for the older generation, the language and the culture are still strongly embedded in their life. In general the majority of Telugus in Klang Valley still have a high regard towards their mother tongue and culture.

ABSTRAK

Bahasa Telugu merupakan antara bahasa India yang umumnya digunakan di negeri-negeri India Andhra Pradesh, Telangana dan Yanam. Ia disenaraikan antara 15 bahasa yang terbesar di dunia dan merupakan bahasa ketiga paling banyak dituturkan selepas Hindi dan Bengali di India. Walaupun bilangan penutur Bahasa Telugu agak besar di seluruh dunia, di Malaysia komuniti Telugu merupakan sebuah kumpulan sub-minoriti kaum India yang hanya terdiri daripada kira-kira 2.4% daripada jumlah penduduk India di Malaysia. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengetahui samada komuniti Telugu di Lembah Klang masih mengekalkan atau telah beralih / sedang beralih ke bahasa lain. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk menjawab 3 soalan kajian, iaitu untuk mengetahui bahasa pilihan komuniti Telugu di Lembah Klang dalam domain rumah, sosial, hiburan, rasmi dan agama. Selain itu, ia bertujuan untuk menyiasat perbezaan pemilihan bahasa antara generasi muda dan tua dan akhirnya mengkaji faktor-faktor utama pengekaln atau peralihan bahasa. Kajian ini menggunakan metodologi kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Pendekatan kuantitatif dijalankan ke atas 100 orang peserta Telugu yang tinggal di Lembah Klang untuk mendapatkan maklumat statistik. Bagi mengukuhkan lagi dapatan, temu bual telah dijalankan dengan 10 peserta. Kajian wawancara ditumpukan untuk menyiasat sebab-sebab pengekaln dan peralihan bahasa dalam kalangan masyarakat Telugu di Lembah Klang. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa bahasa Telugu perlahan-lahan beralih terutamanya kepada bahasa Inggeris di kalangan generasi muda kerana bahasa Inggeris dianggap sangat penting untuk pendidikan, kemajuan ekonomi dan kerjaya. Walau bagaimanapun, langkah-langkah untuk menghidupkan semula penggunaan bahasa telah/sedang diambil oleh Telugu Association of Malaysia (TAM) dan ia sedang dipulihkan secara perlahan-lahan dalam kalangan generasi muda. Bagi generasi lama, bahasa dan budaya Telugu masih kuat tertanam dalam kehidupan

mereka. Secara umum majoriti individu Telugu di Lembah Klang masih memandang tinggi dan bangga terhadap bahasa ibunda dan budaya mereka.

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“Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going.” ` Rita Mae Brown

“... if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible ...” Matthew 17:20

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

For example:

TAM : Telugu Association of Malaysia

PKKT : Persatuan Kebajikan dan Kebudayaan Telugu, Malaysia

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INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the background of the study followed by the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significances of the study, limitations of the study and finally conclusions. This study focuses on the urban Telugu community in Klang Valley who are a sub- minority Indian community in Malaysia. This study is on the language shift and maintenance of the Telugu language in the community.

1.1 Background of the Study

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and a multilingual country comprising a population of almost 30 million in 2013 and 140 individual languages, 138 of which are living and 2 are extinct (M. Paul, Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig, 2016). Although Malaysia is commonly divided into three main races which are the Malays, Chinese and the Indians, Malaysia has a wider range of ethnicity and linguistic representation than the three common racial representations. According to the census carried out in the year 2010, out of the total Malaysian population (28.3 million) the Bumiputera comprise 67.4%, the Chinese 24.6%, the Indians 7.3% and others 0.7% (Census 2010, retrieved from *Department of Statistics, Malaysia website*). In addition, the sub- divisions within each ethnicity further contributes to the multi-ethnic and multilingual nature of Malaysia. For example the Bumiputeras consist of various indigenous groups such as Dayak, Kadazan, Dusun, Bidayuh, Orang Asli as well as the majority who are Malays. The Chinese consist of various Chinese dialect communities such as Hokkien, Hakka, Cantonese, etc. (Navaneethachandran, 2011).

The Indians in Malaysia are also known for their diversity in culture, ethnicity and linguistic background. They are commonly called Malaysian Indians. Malaysian Indians are known as an immigrant community just like the Malaysian Chinese. The ancestors of this community migrated to Malaysia mostly during the British colonial period (David, 2006). Malaysian Indians, like the Bumiputera and the Chinese, also consist of sub-minority communities such as the Malayalee, Sindhi, Gujarati, Bengali and Punjabi communities. Malaysian Indians make up about (7.6%) of the total population, the majority of which are the Tamils (88.2%) followed by the Punjabis (3.5%), Telugus (2.4%), Malayalees (2.3%), Pakistanis (0.71%), Bangladeshi (0.19%), Sinhalese (0.1%) and other Indians (2.6%) (Population and Housing Census 2010, retrieved from The Encyclopedia of Malaysia: Languages and Literature p.56).

However, the focus of this study is on one of the sub minority Indian communities in Malaysia, i.e. the Telugu community, also known as Telugus who speak the Telugu language. The Telugu language is widely spoken in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. It is listed as the 15th the largest language in the world and known as the third most widely spoken language after Hindi and Bengali in India. “About 70 million people in Andhra Pradesh and another 20 million people in other parts of India speak Telugu. There are many Telugu migrant communities in different parts of the world, such as the United States, the United Kingdom, South Africa, Mauritius, Malaysia, Singapore and Fiji” (Kuncha & Bathula, 2004:2).

Despite having a substantial number of speakers worldwide, in Malaysia the Telugu community who speak this language is a sub-minority group of Indians which comprise only 2.4% of the total Malaysian Indian population based on the census conducted in 2000. The Majority of Malaysian Telugus have migrated from Andhra Pradesh during

the colonial period in the 19th century to Malaya. Most of them migrated to Malaya as labourers, traders and some as skilled workers.

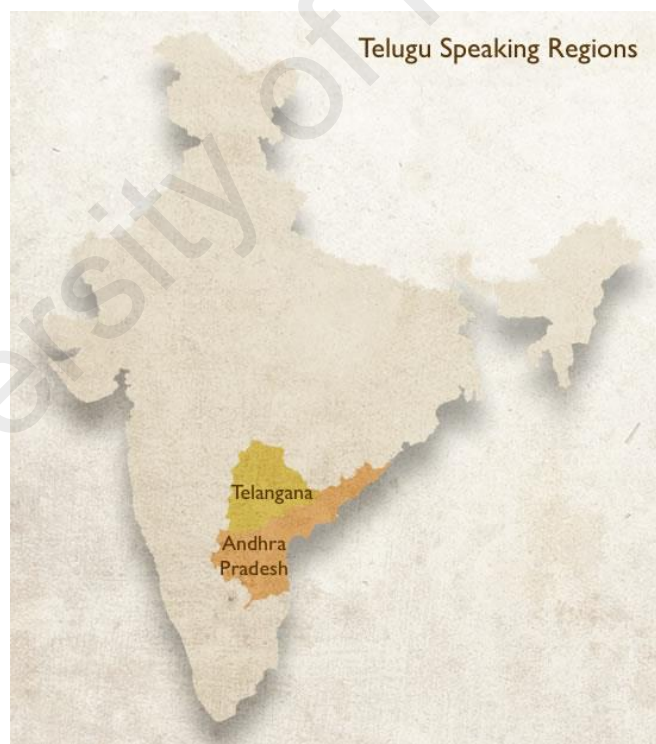
It is recorded that there have been four phases of migration of Telugus to Malaya. The first wave of migration was during the period between the 7th and the 16th century by the traders. During this period and later centuries, it is said that were traders from Kalinga trading in Kedah and Malacca. A place name such as 'Tanjong Keling' is evidence that there was a settlement of Telugu people from Kalinga. However it is believed that Telugus who migrated during this period of time have assimilated with the locals through inter-marriages and have lost their identity (Naidu, 2013).

The second phase of migration of the Telugu people was during the 19th Century. This migration took place on a voluntary basis, whereby many Telugus migrated from the Madras state of India currently known as Tamil Nadu, Rayalaseema and Coastal Andhra. They settled in places such as Taiping, Penang, Ipoh and other parts of West Malaysia as traders, businessmen and administrative staff (Naidu, 2013).

The third phase which was also known as the largest phase of migration took place with the opening of plantations by the British East India Company between 1844 and 1940. Most Telugus who migrated during this period of time, migrated due to poor economic status in their home country, seeking greener pastures. The migration during this period took place under the Thandelu or Kangany system and these Telugus were from the villages surrounding Anakapalli, Srikakulam, Vishakapatnam and Vijayanagaram in India. They migrated to Malaya and settled in the estates in Kedah, Perak, Kuala Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Johor. Life for the first generation of this third phase Telugu migrants was difficult with low wages and poor living conditions. By the 3rd generation, the life of the Telugus has changed drastically with better living conditions (Naidu, 2013).

The fourth phase of migration of Telugus took place in the 1970's, with most being IT professionals, academicians, engineering professionals and medical specialists (Naidu, 2013)

Most of the Telugus one can see today are in their 4th or 5th generation. Although it has been recorded that there are only about 2.4% of Telugus out of the total Indian population in the census conducted in year 2000, it has been estimated that there are more than 300,000 Telugus nationwide in Malaysia based on the information provided by Telugu Association of Malaysia (TAM Foundation, 2010). This study will focus on the Urban Malaysian Telugu community in Klang Valley.



Map 1: Telugu speaking regions in India.

1.2 Statement of Problem

So far, there have been studies conducted on other sub-minority Indian groups but no study has been conducted on language maintenance or shift among the urban Telugu community in Klang Valley. There have been several studies done on sub-minority Indian groups in Klang Valley such as the Malaysian Catholic Malayalees (David & Nambiar, 2002), the Punjabi Sikh (David, Naji & Kaur, 2003), the Sindhi (David, 2006), the Malayalees (Nambiar, 2007), the Ceylonese (Navaneethachandran, 2011), a close-knit Telugu Community in Sarawak (David, 2006) and the Malaysian Telugu Community in Perak, Kedah and Johor (Shanmuganathan, 2010), which all show various degrees of language shift. Thus, this study may help to fill the gap.

Even though a recent source (Gavarasana, 2003) claims that the Telugu language is well and thriving in Malaysia, a recent study on language attrition and maintenance in the Telugu community in Perak, Kedah and Johor shows a rapid decline (Shanmuganathan, 2010). This study will thus try to shed light on the language situation among the urban Telugu community in Klang Valley.

Furthermore, Fishman he stated that when languages are in contact, the powerful language has a high tendency to either dominate and replace the other language, or coexist with the other language and be used side by side in a diglossic relationship (Fishman, 1989).

On the other hand Sridhar (1992) says that "speakers of Indian languages tend to maintain their languages over generations and countries, even when they live away from the region where it is spoken" (Sridhar, 1992:56-57).

Thus, this study investigates whether Fishman's or Sridhar's statement apply to the Telugu language within the Telugu community in Klang Valley, since it is constantly in contact with various local languages.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

There are 3 main objectives in the study:

1. To investigate language choice of the Telugu community in Klang Valley.
2. To investigate the difference/s in language choice between the younger and the older generation.
3. To identify some of the main reasons for language maintenance or shift.

1.4 Research Questions

Three research questions have been outlined to achieve the objective of this study.

Thus, the research questions outlined in this study are:

1. What is the language choice of the Telugu community in Klang Valley in the domains of home, social, religion, entertainment and official?
2. How do the younger and older generation differ in their language choice?
3. What are the main reasons for language maintenance or shift?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study may serve as documentation for language maintenance studies in Malaysia as well as to improve language maintenance strategies of the Telugu community in Klang Valley. It will certainly help the Malaysian Telugu Association (TAM) to be more aware of the language situation among the urban community and to take prompt action if necessary.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The scope of the study focuses on only 100 participants in the Klang Valley area, which comprises Kuala Lumpur and its adjacent districts in Selangor such as Klang, Petaling, Gombak, Ulu Langat, Sepang, Putrajaya, and The Multimedia Super Corridor, which together makes up 86 per cent of the total population of Selangor (Malaysian Journal of Chinese Studies, 2012, 1:40-59).

The sample of participants will only be 100 Telugus who reside in the Klang Valley. Thus, the limitation of this study will be that the findings cannot be generalized to all Telugus in Malaysia or even peninsular Malaysia due to the relatively small size of the sample. The findings may also be affected by the honesty of the participants in answering the questionnaire and responding to the interview questions.

University of Malaysia

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will discuss theories and relevant studies related to language shift and maintenance. It will first discuss speech repertoires in a multilingual setting, followed by domains of language use, studies pertaining to language shift and maintenance, factors that influence language shift and other related studies.

2.1 Speech Repertoires in a Multilingual Setting

Malaysia is a country made up of a multilingual and multicultural population. Thus, they are exposed to a variety of language varieties to choose from during their daily interaction in order to fulfill certain social roles (Hamers & Blanc, 2000). Due to the multilingual setting, it's common to find Malaysians being competent in more than one language as stated by Baskaran (2005). For example, a Telugu working adult who is an engineer may speak in English or Malay with his superior, Manglish with his colleagues, bazaar Malay with the traders in the night market and Telugu at home with the parents.

Based on the scenario above, this study would like to investigate the reasons for choosing one language over another language despite the existence of a wide range in speech repertoire.

2.2 Domain analysis

Joshua Fishman introduced a way to examine language choice, that which is domain analysis. He describes domain as:

“... a socio-cultural construct abstracted from topics of communication, relationships between communicators, and locales of communication, in accord with the institutions of a society and the spheres of activity of a speech community, in such a way that individual behaviour and social patterns can be distinguished from each other and yet related to each other”. (Fishman, 1972a:249)

According to Fishman language choice in a domain is determined by:

1. The topics of discussion.
2. The role relationships of the interlocutors
3. The setting.

There are five domains of language use, which are family, friendship, religion, employment and education originally put forward by Fishman, Cooper and Ma (Romaine, 1995:30). Later other researchers have subsequently added other domains to this original list of domains. Fishman suggested that there are certain institutional contexts, called domains in which one language would likely be more appropriate than others (Sankar, 2004).

A careful choice of the domains is to be studied also important for getting an accurate picture of the language shift. Different domains will be appropriate for different people, different settings and at different times (Sankar, 2004).

Researches have used various domains for their study on language shift and maintenance; for example Parasher (cited in Fashold, 1984) used seven domains,

Greenfield (cited in Fashold, 1984) used five domains, whereas David (1996) only used three domains in her study of language shift among the Sindhis, a minority Indian community in Malaysia. Therefore the number and types of domains chosen will depend on the researcher and the community profile of the community. However, regardless of the number of domains in a study, the family domain has always been consistently included (David, 2001:40).

In this study, home, social, religious and official domains will be used. The family domain plays an important role because it's known as a bastion of language maintenance. Ethnic languages speakers often depend on the family for encouragement and security. When there is decline in the use of the mother tongue at home, it normally means that the process of language shift is on-going (Sankar, 2004).

As for the social domain, it is important to examine to what extent the ethnic language is maintained among the members of the speech community and friends when they socialize. The decline in the use of their mother tongue between the community members is indicative of language shift (Sankar, 2004).

The religious domain on the other hand includes the languages used at religious functions and worship. It's often the last bastion of language survival (Gal, 1979).

The official domain includes the languages used in official sectors such as at work with superiors, school or government offices with the authorities. This is to give an idea of the other languages that may be used by this community outside their home, social and religious domains when interacting with people speaking different languages in an official setting.

2.3 Language Shift and Maintenance

According to Fasold (1987:213), “Language shift simply means that a community gives up a language completely in favour of another one” whereas in “language maintenance, the community collectively decides to continue using the languages it has traditionally used”.

Fasold also states that language shift sometimes is dramatically referred to as language death, which occurs when a community totally shifts away from using its own language to a new language. Language maintenance on the other hand is said to be “often a characteristic of bilingual or multilingual communities”. This is said because multilingual communities are believed to be maintaining each language for certain domains with little encroaching of each language on other domains (Fasold, 1987: 213).

According to Fishman, language shift is also known as a movement away from the ethnic language in which this phenomenon is seen as a noticeable change in the habitual use of a language. (Fishman, 1968:424)

Pandharipande (1992:253) states that, “language shift is a process by which a language A is replaced (partially or completely) by language B to the extent that the former becomes dysfunctional in one or more domains of its use”.

A community’s preference for using another language may lead to the “gradual disappearance of the first language” (Shameem, 1994:404).

Above are the definitions of language shift given and agreed upon by various scholars. However, there is a small controversy on whether language death should apply only when there is one last speaker of the language from the shifting speech community, or it can be applied to a community which has totally shifted away despite the fact that there might

be other people who still speak the language in other parts of the world (Fasold, 1987:213). This question is interesting as it might be useful for the Telugu community worldwide and in specific for the Malaysian Telugu community.

2.4 Factors That Influence Language Shift

Based on Holmes (2001), when language shift occurs, it usually does towards the language of the dominant powerful group. This is because the language of the dominant group is often connected with status, prestige and social success. It is usually used in the wider society, for formal speeches and by the mass media.

It is not surprising then that many young minority group speakers see its advantages and abandon their own language (Holmes, 2001). This study will attempt to investigate if there has been a language shift from the Telugu language, from its traditional domains such as family, social, religion and official on the part of the Telugu community in Klang Valley.

As far as the factors that influence language shift and maintenance are concerned, scholars have identified several factors such as bilingualism or multilingualism, socio-economic changes, economic power of language, government regulations, impact of education and migration, etc. (Sercombe, 2001). Each of these factors will be discussed in detail below.

2.4.1 Bilingualism or Multilingualism

Fasold claims that there is a large number of countries which are bilingual/multilingual due to their linguistic diversity such as Tanzania, India, Nigeria, Indonesia, Philippines as well as Malaysia. Although bilingualism/ multilingualism may not always be a sufficient condition for language shift, it is thought to be the most basic condition for language shift in a minority community (Fasold, 1987). Based on Baetens

Beardsmore, bilingualism/ multilingualism refers to the existence of two or more languages within one and the same speaker, remembering the ability in these two languages may or may not be equal' (Baetens Beardsmore, 1982:2 as cited in Sankar,2004). However, Bilingualism/ Multilingualism can refer to the whole society (Coluzzi 2007:19-20)

This is evident in some studies conducted in Malaysia on ethnic minorities such as the Sindhi community. The Sindhi language was used to accommodate to the grandparents, while English and Malay were used with children (David, 1996). A study on Malaysian Punjabi shows similar trends as the Sindhi community (Kundra, 2001).

2.4.2 Socio- Economic Changes

Socio economic changes influence to the high or low status of a language as perceived by a community. Often many discussions on language shift are concerned with the minority lower-status group shifting to the majority higher status group (Fasold, 1984). For example in Gal's study (1978b, 1979) on the German-Hungarian group in Oberwart who was initially made up of a majority of peasants and spoke Hungarian, gradually after the Second World War found non-agricultural employment and the related German language became more attractive. Industrialization promoted changes in the social and economic aspects of the community.

A study on a similar situation was conducted by Canagarajah (2008) on language shift in the Sri Lankan Tamil community based on the data collected in U.S.A., U.K., and Canada. The study shows that the community preferred English because of the benefits such as education and employment opportunities, thus elevating the family's social status and enabling them to escape the caste stigma. The study also showed how the Tamil community started disassociating themselves from anything linking to the

Tamil culture (including the language) as they claim it enforces their lower caste identity (Canagarajah, 2008).

2.4.3 Economic Power of Language

The degree of language shift depends on the amount of powerful functions a language is able to perform. For example, “the Iban and the Kadazan language in Sarawak, Malaysia are said to become less significant to the younger ones as there is no economic value attached to it” (David & Dealwis, 2008).

It is also interesting to note that due to the economic value of English and Bahasa Malaysia as the national language, the ethnic minorities in Sarawak who are not very well to do economically encourage their children to master these languages. Chinese language, in specific Mandarin, is also known to have a good economic value in the community. This is evident from the number of children who are enrolled in Chinese schools where the children will learn Mandarin. Parents believe that mastering Mandarin will provide better employment opportunity for their children in the private sector in the future (David & Dealwis, 2008).

2.4.4 Impact of Education

In this generation education is often perceived to be very important as it is believed to improve living standards. Thus, parents, being aware of the economic power of language, ensure that their children are educated in the dominant language which has a high economic power. Such development is said to only cause further shift from the ethnic language (Sankar, 2004).

This is also evident, as noted earlier in 2.4.3, in how the ethnic minority parents of ensure that their children are educated in English, Bahasa Malaysia and Mandarin in order to secure a job for them in the future.

2.4.5 Government Regulations

Governmental regulations and pressures are claimed to be an impetus to language shift. A migrant community is often pressured by the host country's school and national language policies to use a language that is not their ethnic language. This further decreases the proficiency in their mother tongue leading to language shift (David, 2001). For example, in Malaysia the Malay language is used predominantly in government administrations and schools and English remains as the de facto language of commerce.

However, there is a policy which promotes the learning of other languages. Based on the Encyclopedia of Malaysia: Languages and Literature, Language Policy in Action (Asmah & Morais, 2004:130-131), it can be deduced that although some efforts for language maintenance seem to be present through the provision of Pupil's Own Language (POL) classes in schools and ethnic language courses in higher education institutes, English and Malay still play a more significant role in many aspects of life (Asmah & Morais, 2004:130-131)

David, Cavallaro, Coluzzi (2009) also stated that "the emphasis on Malay, the national language, and also English, the most widespread international language, are seen as more important than time spent on learning the mother tongue; and a number of speech communities who do not see any economic value in their respective heritage languages are shifting away from the habitual use of their ethnic languages".

2.4.6 Migration

Migration is another factor commonly associated with language shift or maintenance studies. Often, when a minority community migrates to an area where another community is dominant, this results in language shift towards the language of the dominant community.

This is supported by Fishman, when he stated that when languages are in contact, the powerful language has a high tendency to either dominate and replace the other language or coexist with the other language and be used side by side in a diglossic relationship (Fishman, 1989).

Based on his statement above, 'powerful language' can either refer to host or immigrant language and this might lead to 3 possible situations such as the host language dominating the immigrant language, the immigrant language dominating the host language or the two languages used side by side.

As for the host language dominating immigrant language, the most common situation it is evident in the case of French dominating Arabic when Arabic speaking people migrate to France. In America, Australia and Canada, the Immigrant language, English has dominated the host languages, i.e. the native Indian languages. An example of two languages used side by side will be Hebrew and Arabic in Palestine or Malay and Chinese in Malaysia

2.4.7 Resistance to Change

While it's true that minority language speakers often shift to the language of the dominant community, there are some languages that resist changing and are maintained by the minorities speaking them in some areas or domains (Smolicz, 1992 as cited in Sankar, 2004).

This is evident in studies conducted on the Malaysian sub minority of Indian communities such as the Punjabis (Kundra, 2001), Sindhis (David, 1996), Iyers (Sankar, 2004); where all show maintenance of their ethnic languages in the religious domain.

The maintenance of minority languages is ensured when the community is not dependant on the dominant community for job opportunities like Malaysian Chinese

(Kong 1999 as cited in Sankar 2004). This community uses its own language in the business domain and uses Malay and English only when necessary with non-Chinese customers. They have resisted well the changes in the language and maintained the language not only in the home domain but also outside by establishing private schools which teach their language (Sankar, 2004).

Attitudes also play an important role in the shift or the maintenance of a language. It depends on how the community views its own language. If it is viewed as a more desirable language in comparison to the dominant language, then the community would resist the changes. For example, the Tiwa Indians in Mexico regard Tiwa to be a more beautiful language than English and this in turn is believed to promote language maintenance (Fasold, 1984).

Thus, this study will investigate the factors behind language shift or maintenance among the Telugu community in Klang Valley based on the common factors stated by Sercombe (2001).

2.5 Other Studies

The following authors have also looked at language choice, shift and maintenance of sub-minority Indian communities.

David, Naji and Kaur (2003) in the study of Language Maintenance or Language Shift among the Punjabi Sikh Community in Malaysia; investigated language choice, dominant language use in the home and religious domains and language use between different interlocutors. The findings show that the community is shifting and/or using a mix code of the three languages. This study may help to see if similar findings may be obtained from the Telugu community in Klang Valley.

David (2006) in her study on Language Choice in Sindhi Families carried out an analysis across three different generations. Language use across the generations show distinct differences such as in the 1st generation, Sindhi language was used predominantly, in the 2nd generation, English was used with some Sindhi code mixing and code switches and the 3rd generation uses English predominantly with some Sindhi and Malay code mixing and code switches. The influence of Malay in their language largely happened because of the education system as most attended government schools.

Navaneethachandran (2011) in her research on Language Choice among the Ceylonese Community in Klang also made a study across three generations and found variation in terms of language choice between the three generations. The 1st generation used Ceylonese Tamil predominantly whereas the 2nd generation started to assimilate into the larger south Indian Tamil group and spoke more Tamil Tamil. However, the 3rd generation shows no preference towards both Tamil varieties and English has become the preferred language. Both David's (2006) and Navaneethachandran's, (2011) studies would help to see if there are any variations of language choice across generations in the Klang Valley Telugu Community.

David & Dealwis (2006) carried out research on the Telugu community. It was a case study to investigate the issue of language shift among the closely-knit minority Telugu community in Sarawak. They carried out an investigation on the languages used by the community in the home domain. The study was based on the theory set by Milroy (1978) which states that a close-knit social network system promotes language maintenance universally. However, the findings showed that although the community is proud of their mother tongue, they have totally shifted to English by the third generation. Thus, this shows a tight relation does not necessarily promote language

maintenance. The current study on the other hand will provide data on the Urban Telugu community in Klang Valley to find out whether the scenario is similar.

Shanmuganathan (2010), in her preliminary study on Language Attrition and Maintenance of the Malaysian Telugu Community, conducted a study on three states, i.e. Perak, Kedah and Johor. The study shows a rapid decline of the use of mother tongue and the assimilation with other languages such as English, Malay and especially Tamil. The current study would like to investigate if the Klang Valley Telugu community is also assimilating into other communities.

As for the Telugu community as an immigrant community in other country, Kuncha & Bathula (2004) conducted a study on 'The Role of Attitudes in Language Shift and Language Maintenance in a New Immigrant Community: A Case Study.' The study investigates language attitudes of mothers and children in the Telugu community and how they relate to loss of their mother tongue in New Zealand, an English speaking country. They looked into language proficiency, attitudes towards English, attitudes towards Telugu, attitudes towards bilingualism and language maintenance. The findings showed that although they spoke their mother tongue, Telugu, at home, children seem to be losing their language and there is clear evidence of language shift among them.

On the other hand, Yusuf Nofal (2011) investigated the language situations among the Indians of Yemen. He looked at the language background of the Indian community in Yemen, their level of proficiency in each language used, under what circumstances, attitudes towards each language and the factors that support language maintenance or language shift in their community. He based the theoretical framework on Fishman (1989) and Sridhar (1992) and analysed his data quantitatively. The findings showed that the Indians in Yemen are still maintaining their ethnic languages and they have a

good command of them. They also showed a positive attitude towards their mother tongue. Internal marriages and tight relations are found to be significant in maintaining their Indian ethnic languages. Thus, the current study would like to see if the Telugu Community in Klang Valley is maintaining their mother tongue like the Indians in Yemen or shift away like the Telugu immigrants in New Zealand.

David & Dealwis (2008) in the study of 'Why Shift? Focus on Sabah and Sarawak' analysed reasons for language shift in terms of both macro and micro level of reasons. Based on her research, it has been found that Macro-level reasons such as urbanization, increased mobility and education play an important role in hastening the process of language shift among the ethnic minorities. At the micro level, individuals from minority groups usually give in to the social pressures of the majority groups during social interaction and hence shift their pattern of language use according to the available language. This study will try to identify the reasons for language shift or maintenance among the Klang Valley Telugu community.

All the above literature will serve as a comparison to the situation of the Telugu community in Klang Valley in terms of language choice, language shift patterns among the community as well as reasons for language shift or maintenance.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate language shift and maintenance among the Telugu Community in Klang Valley. This chapter will describe the methodology that has been used to obtain and analyse the data. Based on the research objectives stated in Chapter One, this study uses both a quantitative and a qualitative approach. A quantitative approach has been used first to obtain statistical information through the use of questionnaires. To further strengthen the findings, interviews were carried out with a selected number of Telugu residents in Klang Valley.

This chapter begins with a description of the first research instrument i.e. the questionnaire, a description of the selected domains and the community profile. The second part of this chapter then discusses the other instrument used, i.e. the recorded interviews and finally the third part will present the procedure of data collection and data analysis employed in this study.

3.1 Questionnaire

The main instrument used in this study is a three-part questionnaire in English. Questions on part A-personal details and part B-language use in selected domains were adapted from Sankar (2004) whereas, Part C questions on language attitudes were adapted from Yusuf Nofal (2011). The first part, Part A, is composed of 16 questions with one open ended question. This part is designed to obtain personal details from the participants. Questions 1-6 ask basic personal details such as name, age, birthplace, sex, religion and marital status. This would give a general idea of the community and variables like age which could influence the language choice. Questions 7 and 8 ask the number of years participants have lived in Klang Valley and where they lived before

moving to Klang Valley. These two questions have given insight on how long they have been exposed to an urban lifestyle and how this has affected language use. Questions 10, 11, 15 and 16 ask about education, i.e. qualifications and medium of instruction at school and the reason for their choice of school. Questions 12-14 ask about the ability to read and write in their mother tongue and how they have learnt the language.

Part B is divided into 6 sections to analyse language use in general and in 5 selected domains, i.e. home, social, religion, entertainment and official settings. Part C consists of 15 questions with 4 open ended questions. This part is designed to find out the attitude of the respondents towards their mother tongue and the preservation of the language in Malaysia. Questions 1-6 are aimed to obtain information on the participants' opinion and attitudes towards the commonly used languages among the Telugu community in Klang Valley, i.e. Telugu, English, Malay and Tamil. Questions 7-10 focus on Telugu identity and inter-marriages. Questions 11-15 are aimed to obtain information on language preservation.

3.1.1 Selected Domains

In this study 5 domains were selected which are home, social, religion, entertainment and official. The questions on the home domain are aimed to obtain information on the respondent's spoken first language, language/s spoken with their family members in everyday's interaction, discussion and even arguments. The home domain is known to be the most important domain to analyse language shift or maintenance of a minority language community as it is known to be bastion of language maintenance. Ethnic language speakers often depend on the family for encouragement and security when speaking their mother tongue (Sankar, 2004).

Next, in the social domain the questions focus on the ability to use the respondents' languages, i.e. Telugu, English, Malay and Tamil, in a conversation with friends and acquaintances. This section will analyse to what extent the respondents are able to use each of the languages from the scale of 'fully' to 'not at all'.

The domain of religion aims to find out the preferred language in religious practices such as during sermons, performing prayers, singing religious songs, communicating with fellow Telugus in places of worship and reading religious books.

In the entertainment domain, participants were asked on their preferred language when engaging with the mass media. They were asked on their preferred language in which they listen to songs, watch movies, watch/listen to news and read books or magazines.

Finally the official domain is to gauge the respondents' preferred language in an official setting when dealing with public officers, doctors, police and teachers. This domain will help in gaining information on the language used outside the respondents close circle of family and friends.

3.1.2 Community Profile

The total sample of respondents comprised of 100 individuals (48 males and 52 females) who have been categorised into four age groups, i.e. 15-25, 26-40, 41-55 and 56 and above. The exact number of the Telugu population in Klang Valley is unknown, but according to the Telugu Association of Malaysia, the community is made up of roughly 100, 000 individuals. The majority of Telugus, especially the older ones; who are now residing in Klang Valley are originally from other states of Malaysia such as Perak, Kedah, Negeri Sembilan, Johor and Pahang.

This section provides the community profile of the respondents. The community profile consists of information such as age, gender, religion, qualifications, medium of instruction in school and Telugu language proficiency. This information has aided in understanding the pattern of language choice in the selected domains. It has also helped in understanding the reasons for language choice and preference in the selected domains. The table below shows the distribution of respondents categorised into four age groups. Tabulation for all the tables in this chapter is in absolute numbers and percentages.

Table 3.1 Distribution of Respondents According to the Age group

| Gender | 15-25 | | 26-40 | | 41-55 | | 56 > | | Total | |
|--------|-------|----|-------|----|-------|----|------|----|-------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Male | 12 | 25 | 14 | 29 | 8 | 17 | 14 | 29 | 48 | 100 |
| Female | 16 | 31 | 16 | 31 | 10 | 19 | 10 | 19 | 52 | 100 |
| Total | 28 | 28 | 30 | 30 | 18 | 18 | 24 | 24 | 100 | 100 |

N - Numbers

% - Percentages

Table 3.1 shows the number of respondents found in each age group. In this research respondents are categorized into age groups and not in generation to allow comparison in terms of language use between different age groups. Although, the generation concept is known to be an important aspect in the study of language maintenance and shift; it is difficult to define it accurately. Thus, categorizing into age groups is regarded to be more appropriate for this study (Ismail, S. 2009).

The table shows that there are 28 respondents (12 male and 16 female) from the age group of 15-25, 30 respondents (14 male and 16 female) from the age group of 26-40,

18 respondents (8 male and 10 female) from the age group of 41- 55 and 24 respondents (14 male and 10 female) from the age group of 56 and above.

Table 3.2 shows the distribution of respondents according to religion. From the sample of respondents it was found that that the community is from two main religious backgrounds: Hinduism and Christianity. Although it is commonly known that the majority of Telugus in Malaysia are Hindus, it is important to note the existence of the small group of Christians as well, as religion can further divide the community into a sub minority community with its own distinctive characteristics. However, this research does not focus on the comparison of these two religious backgrounds. The table below has been added just to provide information on the community profile.

3.2 Distribution of Respondents According to Religion

| Age | Hindu | | Christian | | Total | |
|-------|-------|----|-----------|----|-------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 51-25 | 24 | 86 | 4 | 14 | 28 | 100 |
| 26-40 | 24 | 80 | 6 | 20 | 30 | 100 |
| 41-55 | 12 | 67 | 6 | 33 | 18 | 100 |
| 56 > | 20 | 83 | 4 | 17 | 24 | 100 |
| Total | 80 | 80 | 20 | 20 | 100 | 100 |

N - Numbers
% - Percentages

There are 24 (or 86%) of Hindus and only 4 (or 14%) of Christians in the age groups of 15-25. In the age group of 26-40, there are 24 (or 80%) of Hindus and 6 (or 20%) of Christians. The age group of 41-55 comprises of 12 (or 67%) of Hindus and 6 (or 33%) of Christians. There are 20 (or 83%) of Hindus and 4 (or 17%) of Christians in the age

group of 56 and above. In total, the Hindu Telugus make up the majority of the respondents, i.e. 80% whereas the Christian Telugus only amount to 20%.

Table 3.3 shows the highest level of education qualification obtained by the respondents. A comparison between the genders in each age group is also shown in this table.

Table 3.3 Highest Level of Education

| Education | | Primary | | Secondary | | Tertiary | | Total | |
|-----------|---|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|-----|-------|-----|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 15-25 | M | - | - | 5 | 42 | 7 | 58 | 12 | 100 |
| | F | - | - | 5 | 31 | 11 | 69 | 16 | 100 |
| 26-40 | M | - | - | - | - | 14 | 100 | 14 | 100 |
| | F | - | - | 1 | 6 | 15 | 94 | 16 | 100 |
| 41-55 | M | - | - | 2 | 25 | 6 | 75 | 8 | 100 |
| | F | 2 | 20 | 4 | 40 | 4 | 40 | 10 | 100 |
| 56> | M | - | - | 8 | 57 | 6 | 43 | 14 | 100 |
| | F | 5 | 50 | 4 | 40 | 1 | 10 | 10 | 100 |
| Total | | 7 | 7 | 29 | 29 | 64 | 64 | 100 | 100 |

N - Numbers
% - Percentages

Respondents from all the age groups have received formal education and thus we can conclude that all of them are literate. This data shows the value the community has placed on education whereby the majority of the respondents have more than a primary education qualification. There is also a clear distinction in the level of education between the genders for the age groups of 41-55 and 56 and above.

In the age group of 15-25, 5 (or 42%) of males and 5 (or 32%) females recorded to have secondary school education as their highest level of education. 7 (or 58%) of males and 11 (or 69%) of females have tertiary education as their highest level of education. This data is not the exact representation of the level of education of the community because some of the respondents in this age group are technically still young and are attending secondary school. However, those who are at working age or above 18 years old have either completed or are currently pursuing tertiary education. There is no distinction between the genders and level of education in this age group.

In the age group of 26- 40, all males have obtained tertiary education, i.e. 14 (or 100%) of them. While the majority of females in this age group have obtained tertiary education, i.e. 15 (or 94%) of them, 1 (or 6%) has only completed secondary education as their highest education qualification.

The age group of 41-55, shows respondents with various levels of education. 2 (or 25%) males in this age group have completed secondary education as their highest level of education whereas 6 (or 75%) of them have obtained tertiary education qualification. Females on the other hand, 2 or 20% have primary education, 4 (or 40%) secondary education and another 4 or 40% tertiary education as their highest level of education respectively.

As for the respondents from the age group 56 and above, 8 (or 57%) have secondary education and 6 (or 43%) tertiary education as their highest level of education. 5 (or 50%) of females have primary education, 4 (or 40%) have obtained secondary education and only 1 (or 10%) has a tertiary education as their highest level of education respectively. Table 3.4 shows a summary of table 3.3, i.e. a comparison in the level of education between the different age groups.

Table 3.4 Highest Level of Education - Comparison between the Age Groups

| Education | Primary | | Secondary | | Tertiary | | Total | |
|-----------|---------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|-------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 15-25 | - | - | 10 | 36 | 18 | 64 | 28 | 100 |
| 26-40 | - | - | 1 | 3 | 29 | 97 | 30 | 100 |
| 41-55 | 2 | 11 | 6 | 33 | 10 | 56 | 18 | 100 |
| 56> | 5 | 21 | 12 | 50 | 7 | 29 | 24 | 100 |
| Total | 7 | 7 | 29 | 29 | 64 | 64 | 100 | 100 |

N - Numbers

% - Percentages

Based on the table above we can clearly see that although all the respondents from all age groups have gone to schools, they show a distinctive difference in the level of education obtained. For the age groups of 15-25 and 26-40 all the respondents have obtained tertiary education with the exception of some in the age group of 15-25 who are still going through secondary education.

Age group 41 -55 have 2 (or 11%) respondents with primary education, 6 (or 33%) with secondary education and 10 (or 56%) with tertiary education as their highest education level respectively. In comparison with the age group of 56 and above, 5 (or 21%) the respondents in this group have primary education, 12 (or 50%) have secondary education and 7 (or 29%) have tertiary education as their highest education level respectively. The data show that respondents in the age group 41-55 have a higher level of education compared to the respondents in the age group of 56 and above. The importance and the value given to education increased substantially with time.

Table 3.5 to table 3.8 show the medium of instruction in the schools, the respondents have attended based on different age groups. The medium of instruction in school depends on the Malaysian Education Policy. It is vital to know the education medium of the respondents as this points to the language preference of the community.

Table 3.5: Medium of Instruction in School – Age Group (15-25)

| Language(s) | Malay | | Malay & English | | English | | Tamil | | Others | | Total | |
|-------------|-------|----|-----------------|-----|---------|----|-------|----|--------|----|-------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Primary | 9 | 32 | 14 | 50 | - | - | 3 | 11 | 2 | 7 | 28 | 100 |
| Secondary | - | - | 28 | 100 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 28 | 100 |
| Tertiary | - | - | - | - | 16 | 89 | - | - | 2 | 11 | 18 | 100 |

N - Numbers

% - Percentages

Based on the table above for the age group of 15-25; 9 (or 32%) respondents went to Malay medium primary school, 14 (or 50%) to Malay and English medium school, 3 (or 11%) went to Tamil medium school and 2 (or 7%) went to other medium schools (Chinese). As for Secondary education, all 28 (or 100%) respondents went through Bilingual (Malay and English) medium school. As for tertiary education 16 (or 89%) pursued tertiary education in English medium while 2 (or 11%) did in other medium (Russian and Indonesian).

The data is in line with education policy of the time. The 9 respondents who went through a Malay medium primary school did so under the National Education Policy (1970), which provided for all schools to be in the Malay medium. However, in 2003 English was re-introduced as the medium of instruction for Mathematics and Science, while Malay was still used for other subjects such as Geography, History, Living Skills,

Art and Moral. This is seen in the data collected above as all the respondents went through secondary school in English and Malay (Asmah, 2004:60-61). As for tertiary education, the majority of the respondents declared English to be the medium of instruction. This is because, although officially Public Universities do use Malay as a medium of instruction, in many cases English is used instead. Besides, many private colleges, mostly located in Klang Valley have been using English as a medium of instruction since the 1980s (Asmah & Morais, 2004:130-131).

Table 3.6: Medium of Instruction in School – Age Group (26-40)

| Language(s) | Malay | | English | | Tamil | | Others | | Total | |
|-------------|-------|----|---------|----|-------|---|--------|----|-------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Primary | 27 | 90 | - | - | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 30 | 100 |
| Secondary | 29 | 97 | 1 | 3 | - | - | - | - | 30 | 100 |
| Tertiary | 1 | 4 | 25 | 86 | - | - | 3 | 10 | 29 | 100 |

N - Numbers

% - Percentages

In this age group, the majority of the respondents went to a Malay medium school for both primary and secondary school respectively 27(90%) and 29 (97%), in line with the National Education Policy, 1970. Only 2 (or 7%) went to Tamil medium primary school and 1 (or 3%) to other medium primary schools (Chinese) and 1 (or 3%) to an English medium secondary school. The majority of the respondents 25 (86%) went to an English medium tertiary education except 1 (4%) who went to a Malay medium tertiary education and 3(10%) who followed other medium tertiary education (Russian).

Table 3.7: Medium of Instruction in School – Age Group (41-55)

| Language(s) | Telugu | | Malay | | English | | Tamil | | Malay & English | | Total | |
|-------------|--------|----|-------|-----|---------|----|-------|---|-----------------|----|-------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Primary | 8 | 44 | 9 | 50 | - | - | 1 | 6 | - | - | 18 | 100 |
| Secondary | - | - | 16 | 100 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 16 | 100 |
| Tertiary | - | - | 2 | 20 | 5 | 50 | - | - | 3 | 30 | 10 | 100 |

N - Numbers

% - Percentages

Table 3.7 shows that a number of respondents who went to Telugu medium school. After independence in the year 1957, National Educational Policy was implemented in 1970 whereby all schools changed to Malay as the medium of instruction in both primary and secondary schools. Mandarin, Tamil and few other vernacular schools such as Telugu were still allowed to use the vernacular as media of instruction but only in primary schools (Asmah & Morais, 2004:130-131).

For primary education 8 (44%) of the respondents attended Telugu medium school, 9(50%) respondents attended Malay medium school and 1 (6%) respondents attended Tamil medium school. When moving on to secondary school, 16 (100%) i.e. all respondents attended Malay medium school. As for tertiary education, 2 (20%) respondents attended Malay medium tertiary education, 5 (50%) respondents attended English medium tertiary education, and 3 (30%) respondents attended Malay and English medium tertiary education.

Table 3.8: Medium of Instruction in School – Age Group (56 and above)

| Language(s) | Telugu | | Malay | | English | | Tamil | | Malay & English | | Total | |
|-------------|--------|----|-------|----|---------|----|-------|---|-----------------|----|-------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Primary | 15 | 63 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 21 | 2 | 8 | - | - | 24 | 100 |
| Secondary | - | - | 4 | 21 | 15 | 79 | - | - | - | - | 19 | 100 |
| Tertiary | - | - | - | - | 5 | 71 | - | - | 2 | 29 | 7 | 100 |

N - Numbers

% - Percentages

The majority of this age group was born before independence and in that period schools existed for each of the largest languages such as English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil which were used as medium of instruction. No respondents have been to a Telugu medium secondary school because there weren't any Telugu medium secondary schools. The majority of the respondents went to a Telugu medium primary school and thereafter pursued an English medium secondary and tertiary education.

The age group 56 and above shows that 15 (63%) of the respondents went to a Telugu medium primary school, 2 (8%) to a Malay medium primary school, 5 (21%) to an English medium school and 2 (8%) to a Tamil medium primary school. As for secondary education, 4 (21%) went to a Malay medium school and 15 (79%) went to English medium school. 5 (71%) pursued tertiary education in English while another 2 (29%) in Malay and English medium.

Table 3.9 gives information on Telugu community's reading and writing ability. Speaking and listening proficiency are not shown as all the respondents have stated that they are able to speak and understand the language to a certain extent. The data below

will help in understanding language maintenance or shift process in terms of reading and writing skills.

Table 3.9 Ability to Read and Write in Telugu

| Proficiency | | Fully | | Partially | | No | | Total | |
|-------------|---------|-------|----|-----------|----|----|----|-------|-----|
| | | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 15-25 | Reading | 3 | 11 | 8 | 28 | 17 | 61 | 28 | 100 |
| | Writing | 3 | 11 | 6 | 21 | 19 | 68 | 28 | 100 |
| 26-40 | Reading | 3 | 10 | 8 | 27 | 19 | 63 | 30 | 100 |
| | Writing | 1 | 4 | 7 | 23 | 22 | 73 | 30 | 100 |
| 41-55 | Reading | 6 | 33 | 8 | 45 | 4 | 22 | 18 | 100 |
| | Writing | 5 | 28 | 9 | 50 | 4 | 22 | 18 | 100 |
| 56> | Reading | 12 | 50 | 11 | 46 | 1 | 4 | 24 | 100 |
| | Writing | 10 | 42 | 13 | 54 | 1 | 4 | 24 | 100 |

N - Numbers
% - Percentages

Among the respondents in the age group 15-25, 3 (11%) can read and write well, 8 (28%) can partially read and 6 (21%) can write partially well, whereas 17 (61%) and 19 (68%) are completely unable to read and write respectively.

Among the respondents in the age group 26-40, 3 (10%) can read and 1 (3.3%) can write well, 8 (27%) can partially read and 7 (23%) can write partially well, while 19 (63%) and 22 (73.3%) are completely unable to read and write respectively.

As from the respondents in the age group 41-55, 6 (33%) can read and 5 (28%) can write well, 8 (45%) can partially read and 9 (50%) can write partially well, while 4 (22%) are completely unable to read and another 4 (22%) unable write.

Finally, as far as the respondents in the age group 56 and above are concerned, 12 (50%) can read and 10 (42%) can write well, 11 (46%) can partially read and 13 (54%) can write partially well, while 4 (24%) are completely unable to read and write.

3.2 Interview with Respondents

Another research instrument employed in this research was interview with the respondents. The information gained from the interview acts as supporting information for the results of the questionnaires and will strengthen the findings of this research.

The interview was carried out with 10 respondents, 4 of whom were in the age group of 56 and above, 2 in the age group of 41-55 and 4 in the age group of 26-40. Interviews with people from different age groups can give a deeper insight on the language choice of the community from the perspective of both the older and the younger generation.

The interviewees were selected by the researcher among the people who could provide a sufficient amount of information about the community. All the interviewees are long time serving active members of the Telugu Association of Malaysia (TAM) or Persatuan Kebajikan dan Kebudayaan Telugu Malaysia (PKKT). Below are the list of the names of the interviewees and their positions in TAM or PKKT.

Table 3.10 Name List of Interviewees

| Age Group | Name | Position |
|-----------|---------------------------------|---|
| 56> | Mr. Siva Prakash Rao | Chairman of TAM Selangor Wilayah Branch |
| | Mr. Sethu Narayanan | Member of TAM |
| | Ms Papamah Sethu | Member of TAM |
| 41-55 | Mr. Polamarachetty, Narayanarao | Member of TAM & PKKT |
| | Ms. Annamah Ramanaidu | Member of TAM |
| | Mr. Polamarachetty Deva Babu | |
| 26-40 | Mr.V. Krishna Rao | Youth Chief of TAM |
| | Mr. Maraiah Rao | Member PKKT |
| | Ms. Anna Narayanarao | Member of TAM & PKKT |
| | Mr. Gopinath Rao | Member of TAM |

3.2.1 Interview Questions

The interviewees were asked 4 main questions and some further relevant questions when necessary for clarification. Below is the list of questions:

Questions:

1. What is the current situation of the Telugu language in Klang Valley - Can most Telugus read, write and speak Telugu fluently?

2. Is there any difference from the past in terms of the language used now? If yes in what way is it different? - Slang, accent, proficiency level, etc.
3. Explain why the differences occur? What are the contributing factors which have caused the differences?
4. How is TAM doing in creating awareness among the younger generation in preserving the Telugu Language and how is the community responding to the campaign?

3.3 Data Collection

This research has both a quantitative and a qualitative approach. A quantitative approach was used first to obtain statistical information through the use of questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed to 100 Telugu participants who reside in Klang Valley. Since it is a minority community, the snowball sampling method was used to obtain participants for the study. However, a few Telugu participants needed to be identified first. Since the researcher is part of the community, the researcher knew a few participants beforehand.

Before the distribution of questionnaires, sociolinguistic data were collected to establish a general profile of the Klang Valley Telugu Community. This was done by distributing pilot questionnaires to a sample of 20 participants.

Based on the community profile, the main questionnaires and the interview questions were edited where necessary and then the questionnaires were distributed to the 100 participants. The participants were assured that all information given was solely for the purpose of research and anonymity would be maintained.

The distribution of the questionnaires was administered by the researcher herself in order to ensure the reliability of the data. In situations where the participants were unsure of the questions asked in the questionnaire, the researcher was there to provide explanation and assist the participants to answer the questionnaire. The researcher briefly explained the content of the questionnaire first before distributing it. Most of the participants did not find any difficulty in understanding the questionnaire except for a few participants who were unsure of certain parts. The questionnaires were administered for a period of 4 months as most of the respondents are working adults and found it difficult to meet the researcher. The questionnaire was distributed to family, neighbours, friends, colleagues who are all Telugus; as well as people recommended by them.

The qualitative part of the research consisted in interviewing selected participants. The researcher used the snowballing method to obtain participants for this part of the research. The interviewees were recommended by other interviewees to the researcher. In total 10 participants partook in the interview. The researcher visited each of the participants in person and clearly explained about the research and about the interview questions before the interview session. The participants were assured that the information would solely be used for the research and were asked permission for the interview to be recorded. On average each interview lasted for about 15 to 20 minutes.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data obtained from the questionnaire was coded, analysed and interpreted using an Excel summary sheet. An illustration of percentages and frequencies of the figures is presented in table form followed by explanations and descriptions. The statistical data obtained was used to analyse language choice in selected domains in order to answer the

first research question. On the other hand, the information obtained from the interview was transcribed, analysed, explained and summarized where necessary.

Both the quantitative and qualitative data were analysed to answer the second and third research questions of this study, i.e. to find out the difference in language choice between generations and the reasons behind language maintenance and shift.

3.5 Conclusions

This chapter has described the methodology that was used to obtain and analyse the data in order to achieve the objectives of this research stated in Chapter One. This chapter has provided explanation on how the research was carried out as well as background information on the respondents, a description of the instruments and the procedures used in data collection and data analysis. The information obtained from the questionnaires and interviews is hoped to shed on light whether the Telugu community in Klang Valley has been maintaining or shifting away from their mother tongue.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter will present and discuss the findings of the questionnaire and the findings of the interview. This chapter is divided into three main sections i.e. language choice, language attitudes and reasons for language shift or maintenance. Given that the aim of this study is to find out if the Telugu community is maintaining or shifting/ have shifted away from Telugu language, the data analysis will focus on answering the three research questions outlined in this study. The answer to the first and the second research questions, i.e. the ones on language choice in selected domains and on the difference in language choice across the age groups, will be obtained from part B of the questionnaire on language choice and from a part of the interview as supporting evidence. On the other hand, the answer to the third research question on the main reasons for language maintenance or shift will be obtained from part C of the questionnaire on Language Attitudes and the interview.

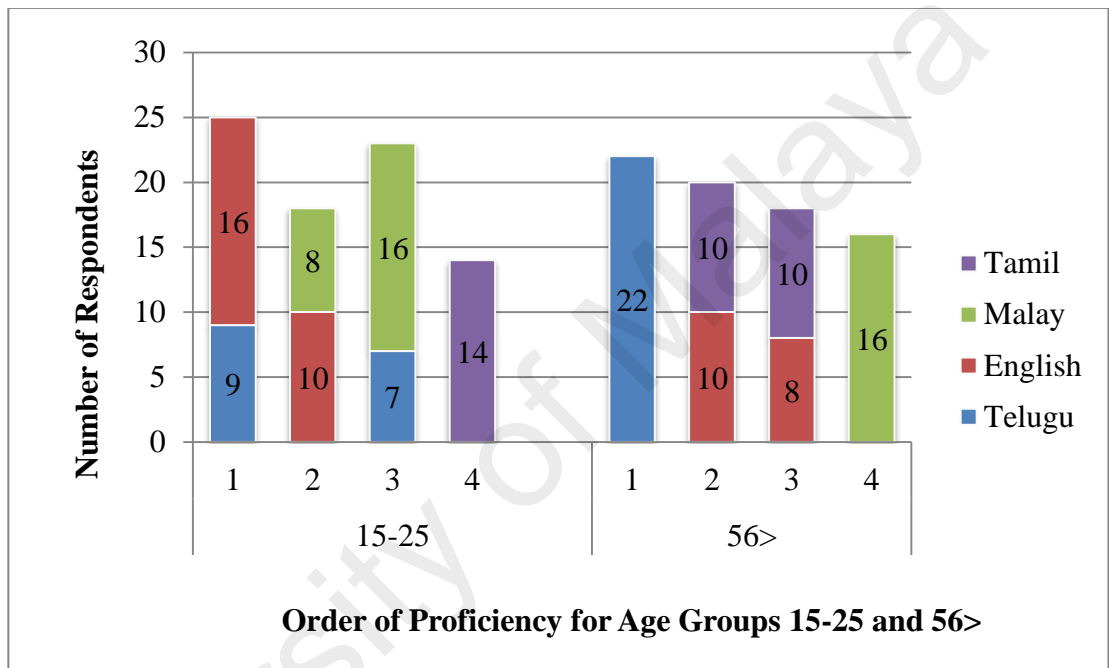
4.1 Language Choice

This section will aim to investigate language choice across the 4 different age groups. This section will be divided into 6 sections, i.e. language choice in general which incorporates the responses from the interviews, home domain, social domain, religious domain, entertainment domain and finally official domain.

4.1.1 Language Choice in General

Malaysia is a multi-ethnic and a multilingual country where most speak at least 2 languages. All Malaysians are required to learn Bahasa Malaysia and English at school while they learn their mother tongue at home. Given this as a scenario, respondents were asked to state 4 languages they speak best in order of proficiency with 1 being the most proficient and 4 the least proficient. This was done based on the respondents'

personal opinions and judgments on their proficiency level. Graph 4.1 presents the graph for age groups 15-25 and 56> to show the difference of language proficiency between the younger and older respondents. The number of respondents doesn't correspond to the total number of respondents because only the majority responses were taken into consideration in this graph analysis. The majority responses reflect the languages used in order by the majority of the respondents.



Graph 4.1 Languages in Order of Proficiency

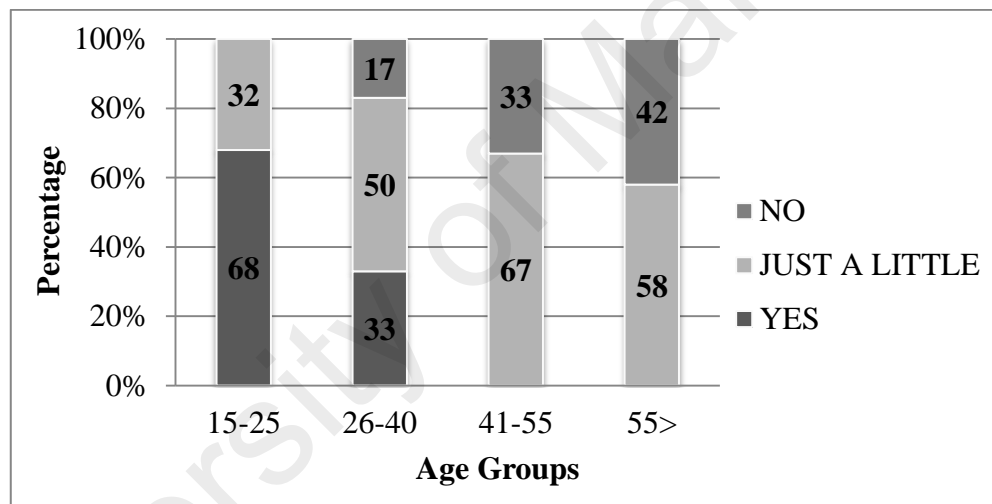
In the age group 15-25, the majority of the respondents stated English (16 respondents) and Telugu (10 respondents) as the most proficient languages. The second most proficient language is English (10 respondents) and Malay with 8 respondents. The third most proficient language is Malay with 16 respondents and the least proficient language is Tamil with 14 respondents.

In contrast, the majority of 22 respondents from the age group 56 > stated to be most proficient in Telugu followed by English and Tamil with 10 respondents respectively.

The third most proficient language is Tamil with 10 respondents respectively and the least proficient language is Malay with 16 respondents.

The findings above clearly show great contrast in mother tongue proficiency among the younger and the older respondents. The older ones are more proficient in Telugu whereas the younger ones are more proficient in English.

In question 2 the respondents were asked if they use Telugu and another language in the same sentence. Figure 4.2 illustrates to what extent they code mix other languages when speaking Telugu.

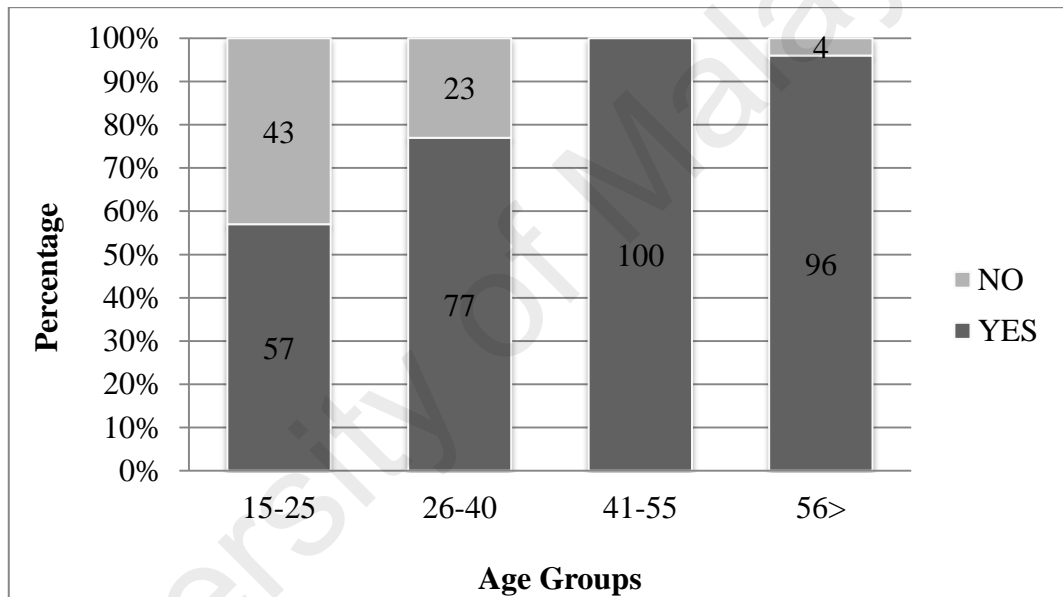


Graph 4.2: Mixture of Other Languages

Based on Graph 4.2 on whether the respondents mix other languages with Telugu, shows that a majority of 68% from the age group 15-25 answered YES, 32% answered JUST A LITTLE and none answered NO. In the age group of 26-40 a majority of 50% answered JUST A LITTLE followed by 33% who answered YES while 17% answered NO. In the age group of 41-55 a majority of 67% answered JUST A LITTLE followed by 33% who answered NO. In the age group of 56> a majority of 58% answered JUST A LITTLE followed by 42% who answered NO.

Based on the findings above, there is a significant rise in language mixing among the younger respondents compared to the older ones. According to the respondents' answers to question 3 on what language(s) they frequently use with Telugu, the answers given were English, Malay and Tamil but English was stated to be the most used.

In question 4, respondents were asked if they speak to a fellow Telugu only in Telugu. Graph 4.3 illustrates the respondents' answers to this question.

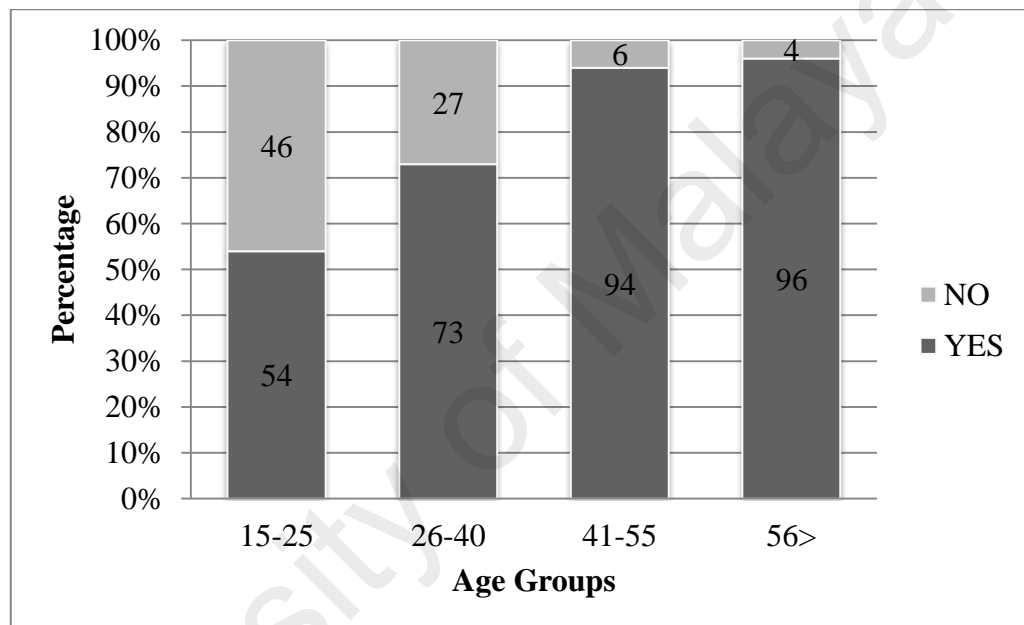


Graph 4.3 Speaking Telugu to a Fellow Telugu

According to Graph 4.3, there is an increase in the percentage of respondents who speak only in Telugu to a fellow Telugu across the age group. 57% of the respondents in the age group 15-25 answered that they only speak in Telugu to a fellow Telugu, whereas 43% answered NO. The percentage of respondents who answered YES increased in the age group 26-40 whereby, 77% answering YES and 23% answering NO. In the age group 41-55 the findings show that 100% of the respondents answered YES. In the age group 56>, 96% of the respondents answered YES and only 4%

answered NO. Almost all older respondents speak only Telugu to a fellow Telugu because of they grew up in a close knit community where only mother tongue was spoken to each other. Besides, their proficiency in Telugu is better compared to other languages. (Refer to Graph 4.1)

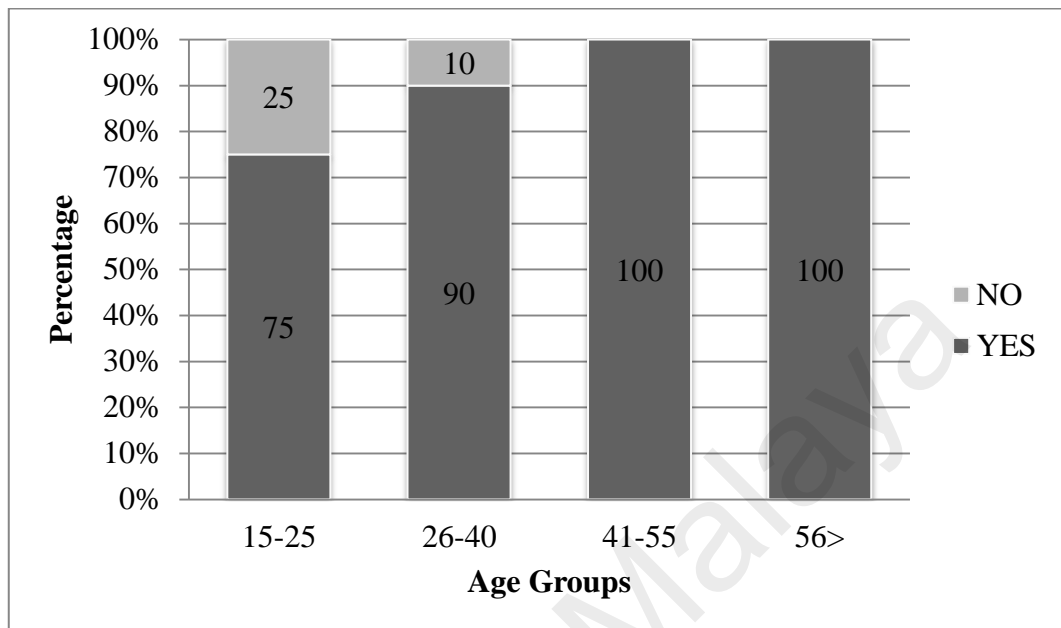
Question 5 asked respondents if they greet Telugus in Telugu. Graph 4.4 illustrates the respondents answer to this question.



Graph 4.4: Greeting in Telugu to Telugus

Based on the graph 4, although the majority of the respondents from each age groups answered YES to question 5 that they greet Telugus in Telugu, the graph clearly shows that more of older respondents use Telugu when greeting than younger respondents. 54% answered YES and 46% answered NO in the age group 15- 25. 73% answered YES and 27% answered NO in the age group 26-40. In the age group 41-55 94 % answered YES and 6% answered NO. In the age group 56> 96% answered YES and 4% answered NO.

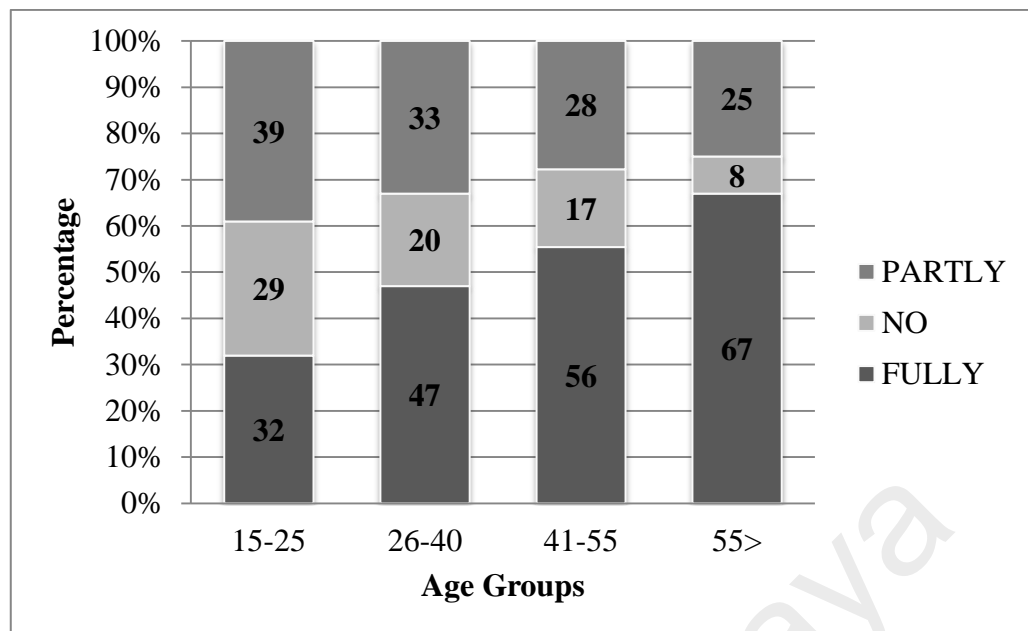
Question 6, asked the respondent if they know how to ask or give directions in Telugu and Graph 4.5 illustrates the findings for the question.



Graph 4.5 Asking or Giving directions in Telugu

Based on the graph 4.5, 75% respondents answered that they know how to ask or give directions in Telugu, whereas 25% answered NO in the age group 15-25. In the age group 26-40, 90 % answered YES and 10% answered NO. In the age groups of both 41-55 and 56> the data show that 100% of the respondents have answered YES. This is probably due to the proficiency in Telugu language which is higher in the older age groups compared to the younger ones. (Refer to Graph 4.1)

Question 7 asked the respondents if they were thinking in Telugu as they were answering the questionnaire. Graph 4.6 illustrates the respondents answer to the question.



Graph 4.6 Thinking in Telugu while Answering the Questionnaire

As graph 4.6 shows, in the age group 15-25, 32% of the respondents answered that they were thinking in Telugu FULLY as they were answering the questionnaire, whereas 29% answered NO and 39% answered PARTLY. In the age group 26-40, 47% of the respondents answered FULLY, whereas 20% answered NO and 33% answered PARTLY. The respondents who answered FULLY further increased in the age group 41-55, whereby 56% of the respondents answered FULLY, 17% answered NO and 28% answered PARTLY. In the age group 56>, 67% of the respondents answered FULLY, whereas only 8% answered NO and 25% answered PARTLY.

Based on these and the findings on language use in general, it can clearly be seen that the use of mother tongue among the younger respondents is lesser compared to the older respondents.

The first two interview questions give a general idea regarding Telugu proficiency and language use among the Telugu community. The 1st question was about the current situation of Telugu language in Klang Valley on whether most Telugus are able to read, write and speak Telugu fluently. The second question aimed at finding out if there are any differences in terms of language use now from the past.

Extract 4.1 Interview with Mr. Prakash Rao (S1)

I : Alright the first question I'll ask you is about what is the Telugu language situation in Klang Valley? (Q1)

S1 : Actually declining lah basically declining lah, so my answer will be is declining because there is no relevance...

I : If let's say you want to summarize sir, ... when I asked about the current situation, usually, referring to the younger generation compared to the older one, if they can speak and write and read, which aspect you think is declining the worst?

S1 : Definitely is the writing lah. Writing part because the thing is that they are not able to convince the students/children how important is it. How do they associate the importance to the future generation? How are they going to use that in Malaysia clearly right, we are not able to send that across to the children so definitely they are not interested!

I : How about speaking and reading sir?

S1 : Speaking and reading as well is declining so the thing is the priority is given to English so the parents realize how important English is, so they just speaking English at home...

I : But do they all know how to speak in Telugu around Klang Valley?

S1 : Ok, so in Klang Valley the thing is obviously, if you compare to rural area Klang valley is urban, definitely the rate at which the ability for the Telugu's in Klang Valley to speak is declining at a higher rate than rural areas, those who are active in Telugu Association of Malaysia like the committee members. Those people, they actually give importance, so they still speak at home like myself, my kids. All my 3 kids can speak Telugu!

I : Alright sir. Can we move on to the 2nd question? (Q2)

S1 : Sure.

I : Well the second question I would like to ask is there any difference in terms of the language used now and then. If yes, in what way are they different? (Q2)

S1 : I have little comment on that, ...it is about the generation gap those in 60s & 70s, they ...want the Telugus to speak pure Telugu, they can't accept the, how to say, what's the right word, the modernization of the language because even in India, the Indians from India, the Telugus from India, I would say right, recently there were a group of Telugu's who came from there, they were surprised with the slang that we use in Malaysia, because it's like its more pure Telugu than compared to them. They have mixed up pretty much you know.

I : In terms of speaking right, do you see people nowadays, the younger generation speak a bit differently or they mix a lot or anything?

S1 : I think that'll definitely be there lah because it's a... it is more about modernization lah, the development in the language just like Malay lah. Malay today, there is so much development... use so much of English right... words translated from English, so if they can use that and they are proud of that, why not we? It's all about modernization, so, that's how the Telugu's in India are seeing that

I : Alright but do you think there are differences in term of language use?

S1 : Yes, definitely!

I : If you have seen people mixing the language ..., what kind of mixing do they do or ... What languages do they mix?

S1 : Malay and English. Basically like 'lah'. Of course typical Indians from India don't do it but here very common they use 'lah'. 'Marilah' and all that.

I : So when they speak Telugu also they use it?

S1 : Yea, pretty much.

I : The language they mix the most will be?

S1 : Probably Malay.

According to speaker 1 (Extract 4.1), there is a decline in the proficiency of Telugu language especially among the younger generation because they do not see the

importance and relevance to current context. Proficiency especially in the aspect of writing skills among the urban Telugus has declined the worst. However, he reported that there are young people who could still converse in Telugu especially from families who are active in the Telugu Association. He has also mentioned how the rise in the importance of English has directly affected the decline of Telugu proficiency.

According to the answers given by speaker 1 on question 2, he said there are differences in terms of language use such as mixture of other languages and the use of 'lah' a Malaysian slang when speaking Telugu. He refers to these changes as modernization of the language. The languages he claimed Telugus usually mix when speaking Telugu are English and Malay.

Extract 4.2 Interview with Mr. Sethu (S2) and Ms. Papamah (S3)

I : So uncle the first question, what do you think of situation among Telugu people in Klang Valley, can most them read, write and speak in Telugu fluently? (Q1)

S2 : Well Telugu people tend to speak Telugu with mixture of other languages or dialect like Tamil or Malay, not fluent in Telugu language and the grammar is not as perfect as the expectation and also there is no school also in Selangor. I think in Malaysia there is no more Telugu schools so how you expect them speak in correct grammar. So this is the reason why Telugu people speak Telugu with the mixture of another language.

I : How about writing and reading skills?

S2 : Even writing also, not many. Out of 100 people, maybe one or two can write and these people probably are former teachers who went to Telugu schools that are all. The new generation nobody knows how to write....

I : What do you think aunty?

S3 : I think our generation is better than the new generation. The new generation very less can write and read even speaking.

I : They can't really speak well you mean?

S3 : Yea they can't speak well. Maybe when you talk they may understand but if you want to converse it's a bit difficult for them, I think lah.

I : So is there a difference in how they use Telugu language from last time and now? (Q2)

S2 : Yea definitely there's a vast difference if you were to compare the new and old generation.

I : What kind of difference?

S2 : The difference as I said the new generation understand the language but they can't talk back as same as the previous generation.

I : In terms of like even if they can't talk is there a difference like the words they use and slang.

S2 : Definitely! Some of the words in Telugu they don't know but those words they use in Tamil, English or Malay.

I : So it's like borrowed word from other language?

| | |
|----------|---|
| S2 | : Definitely yes yes. Like even for example I tell a lot of people they use 'kosong', in Telugu it's 'sunna' but they don't use that, they never use that, they use 'kosong' or 'zero'. |
| I | : When talking in Telugu? |
| S2 | : Yes! Definitely! |
| I | : What do you think aunty? |
| S3 | : Another thing is those days most of them lived in estate. They stayed in one community like that. Once they have migrated to town they scattered everywhere, so mostly they talk better Tamil, maybe because of TV influence. |
| I | : Is there any other difference beside what the uncle mentioned on the word mixture? |
| S3 | : Yeah, mostly that lah. |

Based on the Extract 4.2, speaker 2 affirmed that the Telugu community can speak Telugu but mixing it with other languages. He also adds that the Telugu spoken by the community is not very fluent as there are grammatical mistakes and this is due to the absence of Telugu schools to educate the community well on the language. He also said that out of 100 people only one or two could read and write and these people are those who come from Telugu schools of those days. Speaker 3 said that her generation was much better when it came to reading and writing in Telugu. Speaking, however, is still alright but not as fluent as before.

Speaker 2 answered the second question by explaining how the second generations tend to mix and match words from different languages if they didn't know the exact words in Telugu. Speaker 3 said that it may be due to the influence from the media and contact with the different races that Telugu people are now more proficient in Tamil or other languages than their own mother tongue.

Extract 4.3 Interview with Pollamarachetty Narayanarao (S4)

I : So the first question I would like to ask, what is the language situation of the Telugu community in Klang Valley? Can they read and write and speak fluently?

S4 : I think there's a problem with fluency because there are many races here into one or two they don't go to Telugu schools. We go other schools Chinese or Tamil and then we mix with other races because demographically we are small in number in Klang Valley, so we are exposed to so many other people, so we tend not to be so fluent and writing of course not too because they don't go to Telugu schools. We don't have Telugu education and so they can't write. Reading also is a problem. Speaking is different because they learn it from family and extended family and they maintain it that way. Furthermore, in Klang Valley the parents are also not Telugu educated so how can they guide their children? Unless their extended family members their grandmother and grandfather are there and they have studied the language they'd have a better input to the children and grandchildren. So they'll be able to maintain certain standard of fluency but of course reading and writing we cannot say many parents are not able to guide their children in Klang Valley because they too are busy with jobs we are in different fields and language, so I doubt they can write and read but speaking I think we are doing quite well among the community we

are speaking but not to say fluently. Our language is a mixed language. Of course with all the other ethnic races for example, some words in Telugu we say 'kosong unthi' (EMPTY) it's actually 'lethu'. Certain words from the Malay language have come into the language. Tamil words too have come into the language, so we don't really speak fluent Telugu nowadays.

I : Okay, alright, but speaking is better than reading and writing?

S4 : Yes, because we don't have formal schools, but there are people from the last generation who have been to Telugu schools. Around 30/40 years ago there were Telugu schools those who went there, they can read and write not the present generation. We had Telugu schools in the estates those days and so many of them have been removed ...

I : So can I ask the second question, is there a difference in terms of how they speak now and before?

S4 : Of course because those days Telugus, extended family and parents were from Telugu schools and those from the Telugu community tend to speak good Telugu in the sense that no other language words were introduced in the language you see, but lately once they came to the town it's different already.

I : What is the difference?

S4 : Now because the majority of the people speak Tamil, so our language now has a lot of words from Tamil.

I : Besides Tamil any other language?

- S4 : Now it's mixed a lot with Tamil because we tend to see more on the television and radios and all that whereby we only have Tamil movies, so we are more exposed to that and we try to introduce some of the words in Telugu language, that's because some of the words are pretty similar and has similar pronunciation and we take it quite simple because every other people also know Tamil you see and now you also have English, especially those who have attended English schools also tend to mix some English words when speaking Telugu. We also mix our national language, Malay when we speak because most of us can understand all these languages. So these languages tend to come into core Telugu language.
- I : So compared to English, Tamil and Malay which is the most mixed with Telugu?**
- S4 : I think the most is Tamil but in general I would also say English but among the younger generation is Malay because they go to Malay schools.

Speaker 4 (Extract 4.3) said that the Telugu communities in Klang Valley are not able to read and write in Telugu because they are exposed to people belonging to different races. However, their ability to speak in Telugu is much better.

Speaker 4 answered the second question by explaining how the current generation has introduced words from different languages when speaking in Telugu unlike the generation before when people used to speak in a pure Telugu language. Speaker 4 also says that the mass media is one of the causes for this.

Extract 4.4 Interview with Ms. Annamah (S5)

I : So hi Ms. Annamah let us start with the first question, what is the current situation of Telugu language in Klang Valley? Can most them read, write and speak Telugu fluently? (Q1)

S5 : Compared to last time, it's pretty bad now but they are making the effort to write and also read.

I : How about their speaking?

S5 : Their speaking is not much of problem, as they can already speak quite fluently in Telugu.

I : Alright moving on with second question. Is there any difference in terms of the language use now like compared to before in terms of their slang, accent or proficiency level? (Q2)

S5 : Last time, hmm they may be proficient in Telugu because they only had one language to speak but now since we are living in multicultural society where we speak more than one language the Telugu people tend to speak more than one language and they also tend to mix other languages in while they are speaking Telugu itself.

I : So it kind of affects the proficiency?

S5 : Yes!

Based on Extract 4.4, speaker 5 said that the current situation of Telugu Language in Klang Valley is bad compared to before, even if the ability to speak in Telugu is not much of a problem.

Speaker 5 answered the second question by explaining that the Telugu community mixes all kinds of languages since we are living in a multiracial country, which in turn affects the proficiency of speaking in Telugu.

Extract 4.5 Interview with Deva Babu (S6)

I : So the first question I would like to ask you what do you think of the current situation of Telugu language in Klang Valley. Can most Telugus read, write and speak Telugu fluently? (Q2)

S6 : Well they can speak well but not read and write, but even that many have started sending their children to Telugu classes now.

I : hmm I see. Is there any difference in terms of the language used now like in terms of their slang, accent or proficiency? (Q2)

S6 : Probably not much with the language spoken at home, if family normally speaks Telugu at home but I think I do notice children mixing a lot English and Malay in their speech.

Based on the extract, speaker 6 affirmed that most Telugus can speak but not read and write. As for question 2, he added that there are not many differences as the language is being spoken frequently at home, even if he did notice how children tend to mix a lot of English and Malay in their speech.

Extract 4.6 Interview with VK Rao (Speaker 7)

I : So the first question I would like to ask you, what do you think of the current situation of Telugu language in Klang Valley? Can most of the Telugu people read, write and speak Telugu fluently? (Q1)

S7 : The previous generation like the 1st and 2nd and 3rd generation all can speak and write also because that time we had schools. There were primary school and had the subject offered in secondary school but now the 4th generation they can't write because there's no school. The schools have been closed for almost 20 years.

I : But can they speak? How about speaking?

S7 : Okay speaking, normally if you were to take in Klang Valley they actually do speak at home but to outsiders, no, because normally you would meet like the Chinese people and you tend to use English mostly. Telugu is only used at home...

I : So you are saying in terms of speaking they are okay although not fluent, but reading and writing they can't.

S7 : For an example, I married a Tamil girl; my son is 5 years old. He can understand Telugu because I always talk to him but he can't write and speak in Telugu but he understands what we talk, as he hears us talking, but nowadays most of the children, understand only but later on they maybe can speak lah, which depends on how we train them at home...

I : But reading and writing cannot at all?

S7 : Yes, because no training. Some of the parents also cannot write how to teach?
The training has to start from home.

I : Correct sir. Sorry sir do you think there is any difference in terms of the language use now and before? (Q2)

S7 : If you are asking about the difference means, no difference because it's a mother tongue. Mother tongue is always something everyone keeps. If you were to ask the older people, they won't give up their mother tongue. They have to use but now with the generation it's different. They don't know what mother tongue is, well not all, but about 30% would not know and 70% I think would follow from what the parents have taught them. You can learn many languages but mother tongue is something special.

I : No sir in terms of when they speak right, compared to old generation and now is there any difference?

S7 : Ah yea. Last time they used to speak pure and original Telugu words, they use only Telugu when they speak but now they are mixing a lot... so when they speak Telugu they mix with English a little bit but it's not 100%, it's like 20 - 30% of mixture.

I : What languages do they mix sir?

S7 : Mostly they mix with English lah, Malay and English, but mostly English.

Based on the extract 4.6, speaker 7 observed, that the 4th generation in the Telugu community, the younger generation, cannot write in Telugu as fluent as the 1st, 2nd and 3rd generations did due to not having Telugu schools now as the past generations had. In terms of speaking skill, it is at a moderate level, whereby, the younger generation can communicate in Telugu even if this is limited to only speaking at home with family members. Whereas writing and reading is said to be not at all fluent because of the lack of training from parents themselves.

Speaker 7 also replied to question 2 by explaining that there are differences in terms of the language used now as the younger generations tend to mix Telugu with different languages such as English and Malay, but mostly English.

Extract 4.7 Interview with Maraiah (S8)

I : The first question I would like to ask you, what is the current situation of Telugu language in Klang Valley? Do you think most of them can read, write and speak Telugu fluently? (Q1)

S8 : Okay, to me this is about Telugu language, I think no. In Klang Valley Is a No. The language is slowly disappearing; most Klang Valley people are not fluent in Telugu from what I know.

I : How? You mean for all three aspects like reading, writing and speaking also?

S8 : But mostly that I know got classes now but still they are not very fluent In talking and writing.

I : Not very fluent in talking and writing?

S8 : Yes not very fluent. In terms of writing most of the families are sending the children to classes but speaking wise no. They are mixing with Tamil.

I : Alright, so in all terms reading writing and speaking, all fading away. Is that right?

S8 : Yes. Correct.

I : So let's move on to the second question. Is there any difference in terms of language used now and then? (Q2)

S8 : Yes a lot of difference

I : In what sense?

S8 : Like speaking. Speaking wise, lot of difference because now the younger generation are mixing a lot when speaking Telugu and they are not speaking a very fluent Telugu. Not like those days in 70s and 80s it's totally different. Most of them when they talk Telugu, they'll mix with English or any language, Tamil also they mix.

I : What Is the language they mix the most with Telugu?

S8 : The most will be the frequently mixed language as I see from my friends, is Tamil words, because, I don't know why they mix with Tamil, maybe they grew up that way, maybe that's just the situation at the current moment lah now.

I : But only Tamil you think? How about the younger ones who go to school?

S8 : The younger ones in this generation, as I know they're slowly going to classes and learning from the parents and teachers.

| | |
|----------|--|
| I | : So they only mix with Tamil? |
| S8 | : Mostly the Telugu I know they mix a lot with Tamil words and they don't talk very fluent Telugu. For example instead of saying 'ikida randi' they say 'ika va'. It sometimes sounds like they are speaking a different language you know... |
| I | : Oh they speak like a different language is it? |
| S8 | : Yes a different language but now that I know of few kids from Klang Valley they are a bit okay because they go to Telugu classes, so when they are in class they are okay, they speak in Telugu but when they go home they speak English at home with their parents. |
| I | : So since you say they speak English at home, they mix more of Tamil or English you think? |
| S8 | : No. Telugu families that I know they mix with English lah not Tamil, when I said Tamil earlier I mean when talking to friends who are Tamils but if they are at home means they mix with English, at home mostly they with English language lah. |

Based on abstract 4.7, speaker 8 explains how the Telugu language is slowly disappearing. Also people in the Klang Valley tend to not speak fluently using the Telugu language but instead mix it with other languages such as Tamil.

For question 2, speaker 8 said that they are not so fluent in Telugu because of the mixture of other languages while speaking in Telugu. Adults are noted to be mixing their speech with Tamil, whereas younger kids are mixing it with Bahasa Malaysia and English.

Extract 4.8 Interview with Annapurna (S9)

I : Okay. So, the first question I would like to ask you is, what you think of the current situation of Telugu language in Klang Valley. Can most of them read, write and speak fluently? (Q1)

S9 : I think no because nowadays they are not going to Telugu school. They are going for Chinese or Malay school. So, because of that they are not fluent in Telugu.

I : They are not fluent but so can they read and write?

S9 : Read, writing also same. Yes.

I : So, they can't read and write. How about speaking?

S9 : Speaking? I think they are okay but they are still mixing with the words from English... and Tamil words also.

I : Alright. Ok so you think reading and writing they cannot?

S9 : Yes

I : But speaking better?

S9 : Yes.

I : Okay, do you think there is any difference in how people speak Telugu now compared to last time? (Q2)

S9 : Last time, they spoke fluently because last time they went to Telugu schools and Telugu classes but now no more.

I : What do you think is the difference?

S9 : Difference is... Do you mean the way they speak is it?

I : Yes. Do you think there is any difference or not in the way how they speak or use the language?

S9 : Last time they use pure Telugu. Original Telugu words but nowadays no.

I : Can you give me an example? Can you think of an example maybe?

S9 : You mean the word is it?

I : Yes.

S9 : Like.... When someone come to our house we have to tell them to sit down 'kurchundi' now no more using that word.. 'kukko' this is an example.. Another example is that to sleep 'padukondi' no more using 'padukondi' all. Now they use 'tongondi'

I : Is that a different slang?

S9 : Not slang only. The wording also different. Because in India the meaning is different. 'tongondi' and 'padukondi'

I : Oh okay what's the difference?

S9 : Difference is that 'tongondi' is not the correct word and I mean it's very harsh compared to 'padukondi'?

I : Oh okay. How about in daily speaking for the younger ones when they speak Telugu?

S9 : Fluent. You mean fluency?

I : No. No, when the younger ones speak Telugu, is there any difference compared to last time ... Compared to our parents time?

S9 : Yes, because nowadays the kids are going to school and they tend to mix with English language a lot and then Tamil also in between. At least English okay lah but when they are combining Telugu with Tamil it's very bad I think.

I : Why do you think it's bad?

S9 : I don't know. (Laughs)

I : You are not sure. It's okay.

S9 : Ah yes.

Based on extract 4.8, speaker 9 says that most of the Telugus cannot read and write and the speaking is not so fluent because they are attending Chinese or Malay schools. Overall, they are not fluent in writing and reading in Telugu, but when it comes to speaking they are somehow at a moderate level because they tend to mix their speech with other languages.

For question 2, she said there are differences in the language used now compared to the past as the old timers used pure and original Telugu words compared to people nowadays who mix Telugu with various languages. On top of this, she says not only the slang is different, but the words used are also different.

Extract 4.9 Interview with Gopinath Rao (S10)

I : The first question I would like to ask you what you think of the current situation of Telugu language in Klang Valley. Can most of the Telugus read, write and speak fluently? (Q1)

S10 : I would say it has dropped about 30% so that's the current situation. That means its dropping over the years. So you would the first generation will be okay because they speak among themselves among family members and so on and in terms of writing I won't say much, maybe about 50% but the second generation dropped and I would see further drop in the next generation as well. So that's current situation here.

I : Will you see further dropping sir?

S10 : Yes, if there's no action taken, I will definitely say there'll be a further drop.

I : So the second question is, I would ask, do you see if there is any difference in language used from now than before? (Q2)

S10 : Yeah oh yeah yeah, in terms of fluency there's a lot of differences. Actually what the parents now emphasize in their homes is the priority given to the children so, they speak English mainly English for all those parents who are in Klang Valley. So what happens is that they hardly speak Telugu with the kids or the family members. I'm talking about the new generation born here in KL compared to the older generations who have migrated, so those who are born here they usually speak English among parents and their siblings. Most of them but I'm not saying all.... so definitely when they emphasize English as their first language when they try to speak Telugu it'll be totally different in terms of slang

and accent as well. You can notice when they speak Telugu, that they don't really talk Telugu at home because the way they pronounce or talking is different and so on, so proficiency dropped but you see the other thing I've noticed is that parents when I asked some parents why they don't teach Telugu and so on, they usually tell me that they can pick up Telugu anytime, English is important because it's economically important as well so, they can pick but over the years they forget that it's not as easy as they say because when they are comfortable with the language they've been speaking, it'll be difficult for them to change or learn, it'll take time for them but if you practice from small, if you encourage and learn the language from small then it'll be easy but that's not happening.

I : Well some have said that the current generation mixes a lot with other languages when they speak

S10 : Oh yeah yeah because they don't talk Telugu well, so what happens is that they try to find words, so when they cannot find word which they want to utter so they'll mix it up with other languages. That's common.

I : Alright

S10 : Like even kids when they talk either in BM (Malay) or English when they can't find certain words and they mix it up with others.

I : ...What are the languages they mix and which language they tend to mix the most?

S10 : English is the most. English is the most.

Based on the extract 4.9, speaker 10 said that the current situation of Telugu language in Klang Valley has deteriorated tremendously in terms of reading, writing and speaking and it will continue to get worse if no action is being taken.

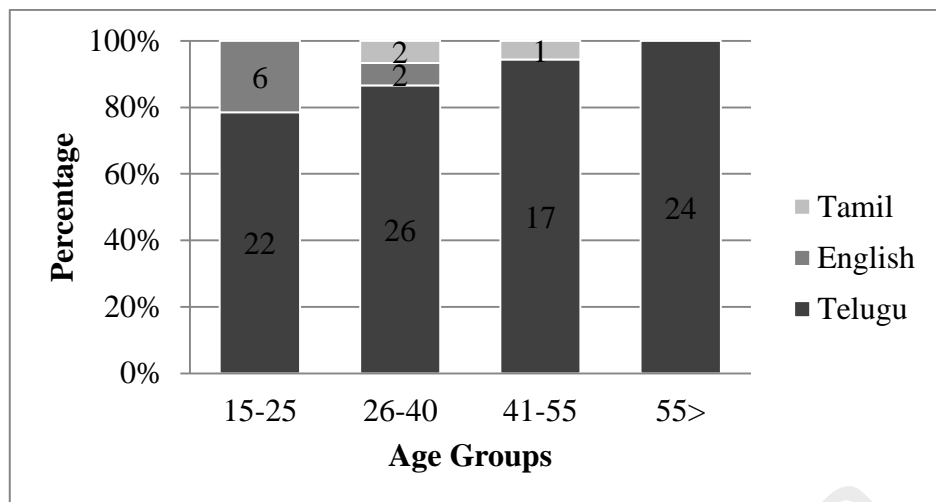
Speaker 10 answered question 2 by explaining how parents are making it a priority for their kids to speak only in English as English is seen as a prestigious language. He also added that the younger generation tends to mix or replace some words in English when speaking in Telugu because of not knowing the exact words in Telugu. Usually this group mixes a lot with English.

Based on all the extracts above, it can be deduced that the majority of the Telugus in the current generation are not fluent in Telugu especially in reading and writing. Although many can speak the language, they often mix it with other languages. Their understanding/listening skills however are fairly good.

4.1.2 Language Use in the Home Domain

Question 1 asked what language the respondents first spoke with their parents. The majority of the respondents have stated that they first spoke Telugu with their parents across all age groups except 3 from the age group 15-25 who stated that their first language is English, 2 from age group 26-40 each stated that Tamil and English respectively are their first languages and 1 from age group 41-55 who stated that Tamil is his first language.

When asked if they normally speak Telugu at home, the majority answered positively except 6 from the age group 15-25, 4 from 26-40 and 1 from 41-55 who replied negatively and explained that they speak English or Tamil at home.



Graph 4.7: Language Normally Spoken at Home

Question 4 asked the respondents to state which language(s) they normally speak with their family members such as grandparents, parents, siblings, relatives, children and spouse/partner. Table 4.1 to Table 4.4 will illustrate the findings for this question based on the age groups.

Table 4.1 Language(s) Spoken to Family Members (Age Group 15-25)

| People | Grandparents | | Parents | | Siblings | | Relatives | | Spouse/Partner | |
|------------------|--------------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Telugu | 21 | 78 | 9 | 32 | 2 | 7 | 11 | 39 | 3 | 33 |
| English | 2 | 7 | 4 | 14 | 12 | 43 | 3 | 11 | 5 | 56 |
| Telugu & English | 4 | 15 | 14 | 50 | 11 | 39 | 12 | 43 | 1 | 11 |
| Telugu & Tamil | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | - | 2 | 7 | - | - |
| English & Malay | - | - | - | - | 2 | 7 | - | - | - | - |
| English & Other | - | - | - | - | 1 | 4 | - | - | - | - |
| TOTAL | 27 | 100 | 28 | 100 | 28 | 100 | 28 | 100 | 9 | 100 |

N - Numbers

% - Percentage

Based on the Table 4.1, the majority of the respondents, i.e. 21 people (78%) from the age group 15-25, stated they speak Telugu with their grandparents whereas 2 (7%) stated they speak English and 4(15%) stated that they speak Telugu& English with their grandparents. With parents, the majority of 14 (50%) respondents stated that they speak Telugu & English followed by 9 (32%) who speak Telugu, 4 (14%) who speak English and only 1(4%) who speaks Telugu & Tamil. The majority of 12 respondents (43%) stated that they speak English with their siblings followed by 11(39%) who speak Telugu & English, 2 (7%) stated that they speak Telugu and both English & Malay respectively and only 1(4%) who speaks English & Other (Mandarin). A majority of 12 (43%) respondents stated that they speak Telugu & English with their relatives, followed by 11 (39%) who speak Telugu, 3 (11%) who speak English and only 2 (7%) who speak both Telugu & Tamil. As with the spouse/partner, only 9 respondents answered probably due to the young age of the respondents in the group who are not married or not in a relationship. 5 (56%) respondents stated that they speak English with their spouse/partner followed by 3(33%) who responded that they speak in Telugu and only 1(11%) who speaks both in Telugu & English.

Table 4.2 Language(s) Spoken to Family Members (Age Group 26-40)

| People | Grand-parents | | Parents | | Siblings | | Relatives | | Children | | Spouse / Partner | |
|------------------|---------------|----|---------|----|----------|----|-----------|----|----------|----|------------------|----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Telugu | 28 | 93 | 14 | 47 | 12 | 40 | 21 | 70 | 4 | 20 | 8 | 36 |
| English | | | 5 | 17 | 5 | 17 | - | - | 4 | 20 | 8 | 36 |
| Tamil | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | - | - | 1 | 5 |
| Telugu & Tamil | 1 | 3 | 2 | 7 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| English & Tamil | - | - | - | - | 2 | 7 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 5 |
| Telugu & English | - | - | 8 | 27 | 7 | 23 | 8 | 27 | 10 | 50 | 4 | 18 |
| English & Malay | - | - | - | - | 3 | 10 | - | - | 2 | 10 | - | - |

N – Numbers

% - Percentage

Table 4.2 shows the language(s) spoken to family members in the age group of 26-40. The majority of the respondents i.e. 28 people (93%) from this age group stated they speak Telugu with their grandparents, whereas only 1 (3%) stated that he speaks Tamil and another one that he speaks Telugu & Tamil. With parents, the majority of 14 (47%) respondents stated that they speak Telugu followed by 5(17%) who speak English, 2 (7%) who speaks both Telugu & Tamil, and only 1(3%) who speaks Tamil. The majority of 12 (40%) stated that they speak Telugu with their siblings followed by 7(23%) who speak Telugu & English, 5 (17%) stated that they speak English, 3 (10%) that speak English & Malay, 2 (7%) that speak English & Tamil and only 1(3%) who speaks Tamil. A majority of 21 (70%) of the respondents stated that they speak Telugu with their relatives followed by 8 (27%) who speak Telugu& English and only 1 (3%) who speaks Tamil. The majority of 10 respondents (50%) stated that they speak Telugu

&English with their children followed by 4 (20%) who speak Telugu and English respectively and only 2 (10%) who speak English & Malay. As with the spouse/partner, 8 (36%) respondents stated that they speak Telugu and English respectively followed by 4(18%) who responded that they speak in Telugu& English, and only 1(5%) who speaks in English and another one who uses English & Tamil.

Table 4.3 Language(s) Spoken to Family Members (Age Group 41-55)

| People | Grand-parents | | Parents | | Siblings | | Relatives | | Children | | Spouse / Partner | |
|------------------|---------------|-----|---------|-----|----------|-----|-----------|-----|----------|-----|------------------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Telugu | 8 | 100 | 17 | 94 | 13 | 72 | 16 | 89 | 12 | 67 | 13 | 72 |
| Telugu & Tamil | - | - | 1 | 6 | 1 | 6 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Telugu & English | - | - | - | - | 4 | 22 | 2 | 11 | 6 | 33 | 5 | 28 |
| TOTAL | 8 | 100 | 18 | 100 | 18 | 100 | 18 | 100 | 18 | 100 | 18 | 100 |

N – Numbers
% - Percentage

Table 4.3 reports on the languages spoken to family members by the respondents of the age group on 41-55. All of the respondents, i.e. of 8 (100%) stated that they speak Telugu with their grandparents. As many as 17 (94%) respondents stated that they speak Telugu with their parents and only 1 (6%) speaks Telugu & Tamil. 13 (72%) respondents stated that they speak Telugu with their siblings, 4 (22%) stated that they speak Telugu& English and only 1 (6%) speaks Telugu & Tamil. As with relatives, the majority of 16 (89%) stated that they speak Telugu with their relatives and only 2 (11%) speak Telugu & English. 12 (67%) stated that they speak in Telugu with their children and 6 (33%) speak Telugu & English. The majority of 13 respondents (72%) also stated that they speak in Telugu with their spouse/partner and 5 (28%) speak Telugu & English with them.

Table 4.4 Language(s) Spoken to Family Members (Age Group 56 >)

| People | Grand-parents | | Parents | | Siblings | | Relatives | | Children | | Spouse / Partner | |
|------------------|---------------|-----|---------|-----|----------|-----|-----------|-----|----------|-----|------------------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Telugu | 12 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 15 | 63 | 20 | 83 |
| Telugu & English | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 9 | 38 | 4 | 17 |
| TOTAL | 12 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 |

N – Numbers
% - Percentage

According to Table 4.4, all respondents from the age group 56 > stated that they speak Telugu with their grandparents, parents, siblings and relatives. However, 15 (63%) respondents stated that they speak in Telugu with their children and 9 (38%) stated that they speak in Telugu & English with their children. 20 (83%) stated that they speak in Telugu with their spouse / partner and 4 (17%) stated that they speak in Telugu & English with them. Based on the findings in this age group, it can be said that Telugu is still highly used in the home domain when communicating with family members but at the same time English has slowly been introduced in the family domain especially when communicating with children.

Based on Table 4.1 to Table 4.4 it can be clearly seen that the use of mother tongue among the respondents of the older age group is higher than the younger age group. It is also noticeable how the use of other languages starts from the nucleus family in the older age group and slowly spreads to the extended family members in the younger age group. For example in the age group of 56> the respondents state that they speak Telugu & English only with their children and spouse/partner and in the age group 41-55 respondents have started using Telugu & English with the siblings as well. This goes on in the age group of 26-40 where respondents use a mixture of Telugu & English with

parents and relatives. In the age group of 15-25 the data show that the use of English has extended to parents, grandparents and relatives at a slightly higher percentage.

There are also a small number of respondents who stated that they use Tamil. This started in the age group of 41-55 and increased in the age group of 26-40 and decreased back in the age group of 15-25. This is probably due to mix marriages between the Tamils and Telugus which brought about the need to use both languages. Another reason could be probably the influence of mass media and social life whereby the majority of Indians are Tamils. (Refer to interview)

The use of Malay with English has also been detected in the age groups of 26-40 and 15-25. This is probably due to the influence of school whereby Malay is a compulsory subject taught in school and the respondents use it frequently in school and bring it back home. (Refer to interview)

In question 5 the respondents were asked what language(s) they normally use in certain specific situations such as when scolding their children, arguing with parents, arguing with siblings, arguing with spouse/partner and talking with family. This will give further insight into the language(s) usually used in the home domain. Table 4.5 to Table 4.8 will illustrate the findings for this question.

Table 4.5 Language(s) Used When Arguing and Talking with Family Members**(Age Group 15-25)**

| People | Arguing with parents | | Arguing with siblings | | Arguing with spouse / partner | | Talking with your family at dinner table | |
|------------------|----------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|-------------------------------|-----|--|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Telugu | 9 | 32 | 6 | 21 | - | - | 5 | 18 |
| English | 8 | 29 | 12 | 43 | 5 | 56 | 7 | 25 |
| Telugu & English | 11 | 39 | 7 | 25 | 4 | 44 | 15 | 54 |
| English & Malay | - | - | 3 | 11 | - | - | - | - |
| Telugu & Tamil | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 4 |
| TOTAL | 28 | 100 | 28 | 100 | 9 | 100 | 28 | 100 |

N – Numbers

% - Percentage

Based on Table 4.5, a majority of 11 (39%) respondents stated that they argue in Telugu & English with their parents, followed by 9 (32%) who argue in Telugu, while 8 (29%) argue in English. The majority, i.e. 12 respondents (43%) have stated that they argue in English with their siblings followed by 7 (25%) who argue in Telugu & English, 6 (21%) stated that they argue in Telugu and only 3 (11%) argue in English & Malay. As with the spouse/partner only 9 respondents answered probably due to the young age whereby they are not married or not in a relationship. A majority of 5 (56%) respondents stated that they argue in English with their spouse/partner followed by 4 (44%) who argue in Telugu & English. 15 (54%) of the respondents stated that they talk in Telugu & English with their family at dinner table followed by 7 (25%) who responded that they speak in English and 5 (18%) that they speak in Telugu and only 1 (11%) speak in Telugu & Tamil.

Table 4.6 Language(s) Used When Arguing and Talking with Family Members**(Age Group 26-40)**

| People | Scolding your children | | Arguing with parents | | Arguing with siblings | | Arguing with spouse/partner | | Talking with your family | |
|------------------|------------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|-----------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Telugu | 4 | 20 | 18 | 60 | 5 | 17 | 7 | 32 | 8 | 27 |
| English | 7 | 35 | 4 | 13 | 12 | 40 | 6 | 27 | 3 | 10 |
| Tamil | - | - | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 5 | - | - |
| Telugu & Tamil | 1 | 5 | - | - | 1 | 3 | - | - | 2 | 7 |
| English & Tamil | - | - | 2 | 7 | 2 | 7 | - | - | 2 | 7 |
| Telugu & English | 8 | 40 | 5 | 17 | 9 | 30 | 8 | 36 | 15 | 50 |
| TOTAL | 20 | 100 | 30 | 100 | 30 | 100 | 22 | 100 | 30 | 100 |

N – Numbers

% - Percentage

Based on the Table 4.6, the majority stated that they scold their children in Telugu & English, i.e. 8 respondents (40%), followed by 7 (35%) who scold in English, 4 (20%) who scold in Telugu and only 1 (5%) who scolds in Telugu & Tamil. A majority of 18 (60%) respondents stated that they argue in Telugu with their parents followed by 5 (17%) who argue in Telugu & English, 4 (13%) argue in English, 2 (7%) argue in English & Tamil and only 1 (3%) argues in Tamil. The majority, i.e. 12 respondents (40%) has stated that they argue in English with their siblings followed by 9 (30%) who argue in Telugu & English, 5 (17%) stated that they argue in Telugu and 2 (7%) argue in English & Tamil only 1 (3%) who argues in Tamil and another one who argues in Telugu & Tamil. A majority of 8 (36%) of the respondents stated that they argue in Telugu & English with their spouse/partner, followed by 7 (32%) who argue in Telugu, 6 (27%) argue in English and only 1 (5%) argues in Tamil. 15 (50%) respondents stated that they talk in Telugu & English with their family at dinner table, followed by 8 (27%)

who responded that they speak in Telugu, 3 (10%) speak in English, 2 (7%) speak in Telugu & Tamil and another two speak in English & Tamil.

Table 4.7 Language(s) Used When Arguing and Talking with Family Members

(Age Group 41-55)

| People | Scolding your children | | Arguing with parents | | Arguing with siblings | | Arguing with spouse / partner | | Talking with your family | |
|------------------|------------------------|------------|----------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Telugu | 10 | 56 | 17 | 94 | 15 | 83 | 18 | 100 | 17 | 94 |
| Tamil | - | - | 1 | 6 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| English & Tamil | - | - | - | - | 1 | 6 | - | - | 1 | 6 |
| Telugu & English | 8 | 44 | | | 2 | 11 | - | - | - | - |
| TOTAL | 18 | 100 | 18 | 100 | 18 | 100 | 18 | 100 | 18 | 100 |

N – Numbers

% - Percentage

Based on Table 4.7, the majority has stated that they scold their children in Telugu, i.e. 10 respondents (56%) followed by 8 (44%) who scold in Telugu & English. A majority of 17 (94%) respondents stated that they argue in Telugu with their parents followed by only 1 (6%) who argues in Tamil. The majority, i.e. 15 respondents (83%) has stated that they argue in Telugu with their siblings followed by 2(11%) who argues in Telugu & English and only 1 (6%) who argue in English & Tamil. All 18 (100%) respondents in this age group stated that they argue in Telugu with their spouse/partner. 17 (94%) respondents stated that they talk in Telugu with their family at dinner table followed by only 1 (6%) who responded that he speaks in English & Tamil.

Table 4.8 Language(s) Used When Scolding, Arguing and Talking with Family

Members (Age Group 56 >)

| People | Scolding your children | | Arguing with parents | | Arguing with siblings | | Arguing with spouse / partner | | Talking with your family | |
|------------------|------------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|-----------------------|-----|-------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-----|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Telugu | 18 | 75 | 24 | 100 | 22 | 92 | 22 | 92 | 20 | 83 |
| Telugu & English | 6 | 25 | | | 2 | 8 | 2 | 8 | 4 | 17 |
| TOTAL | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 | 24 | 100 |

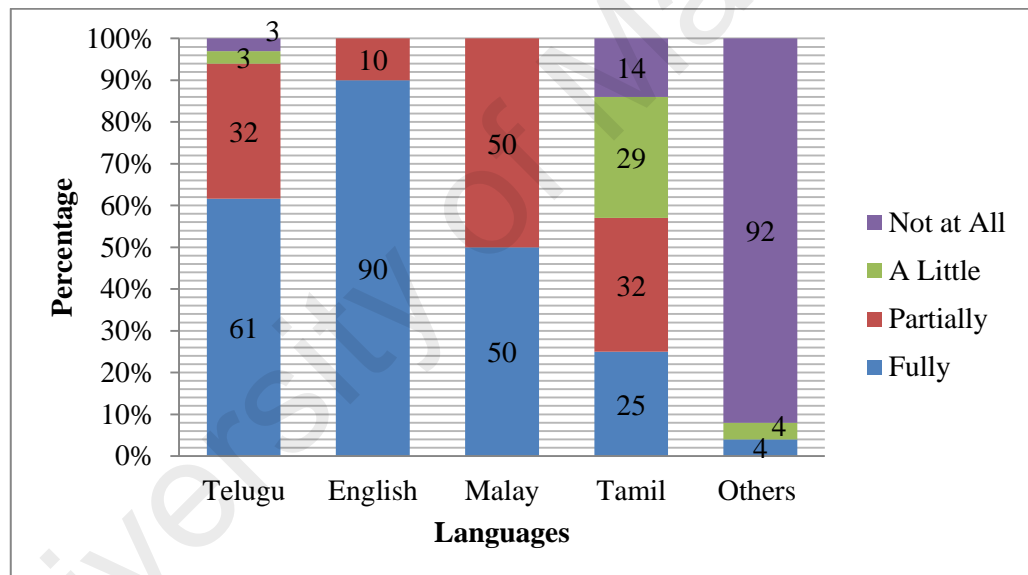
N – Numbers % - Percentage

Based on the Table 4.8, a majority of 18 (75%) respondents stated that they scold their children in Telugu followed by 6 (25%) who scold them in Telugu & English. All of the respondents, 24 people (100%) stated that they argue in Telugu with their parents. The majority, i.e. 22 respondents (92%) stated that they argue in Telugu with their siblings followed by 2 (8%) who argue in Telugu & English. A majority of 22 (92%) respondents also stated that they argue in Telugu with their spouse/partner followed by 2 (8%) who argue in Telugu & English. 20 (83%) respondents stated that they talk in Telugu with their family at dinner table followed by 4 (17%) who responded that they speak in Telugu & English.

The findings obtained from Table 4.5 to Table 4.8 give a more detailed description on the language use in the home domain, especially of the nucleus family. The use of Telugu decreases among the respondents of the younger age group. The use of English increases among the respondents of younger age group. The use of Tamil language was introduced in the age group of 41-55 and it increases in the age group 26-40 whereas it decreases back in the age group of 15-25. In the age group of 15-25 we can see the beginning of use of Malay in the home domain as well.

4.1.3 Language Use in the Social Domains

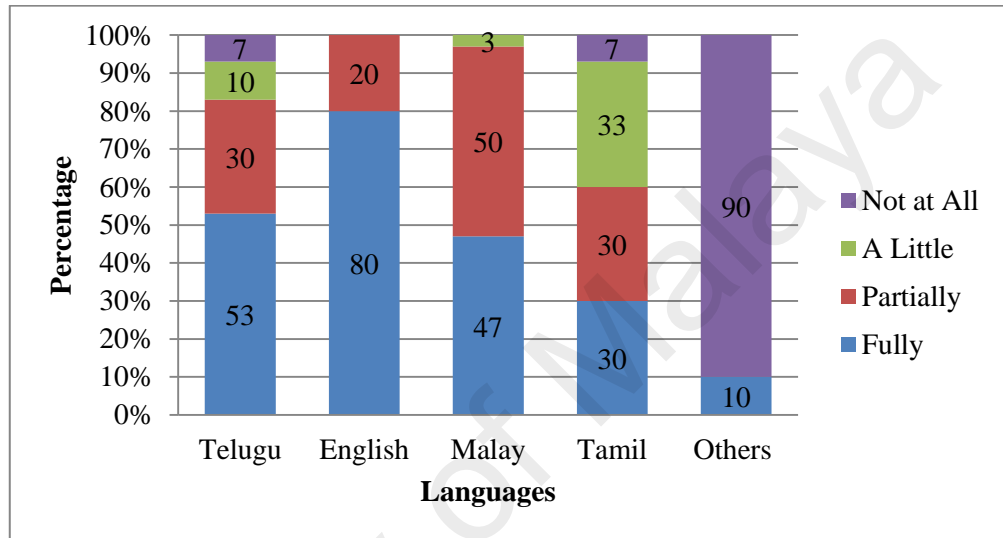
The first question in this section of the questionnaire asked the respondents to tick the language(s) they can use in a conversation with friends and acquaintances of various ethnicities. Malaysia is a multiracial country and the majority are able to converse in several languages at a different level of fluency. Due to this reason the respondents were given the flexibility to choose more than one language(s) but were asked to state their level of usage in a conversation. The respondents had to state if they can use the language fully, partially, a little, or not at all. This gives insight to how comfortable the respondents are in using certain language(s) in a conversation.



Graph 4.8 Language(s) Use in a Conversation with Friends and Acquaintances (Age Group 15-25)

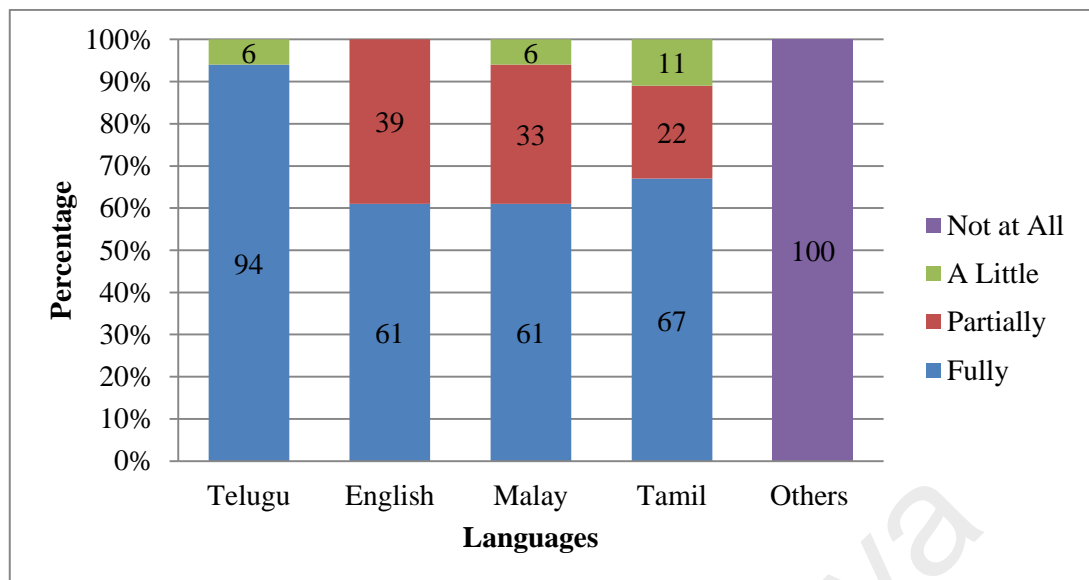
Graph 4.8 shows language(s) use in a conversation with friends and acquaintances and the level of proficiency for the age group 15-25. In the age group 15-25, the language with the highest percentage of respondents being able to use it fully is English (90%) followed by Telugu (61%), Malay (50%), Tamil (25%) and Others (Mandarin) (4%). The language which was marked by the percentage of highest respondents for

being able to use partially in a conversation with friends and acquaintances is Malay (50%) followed by Telugu and Tamil both at 32% and English at 10%. The languages which respondents answered that they can use only a little are Tamil (29%), Other (Mandarin) (4%) and Telugu (3%).



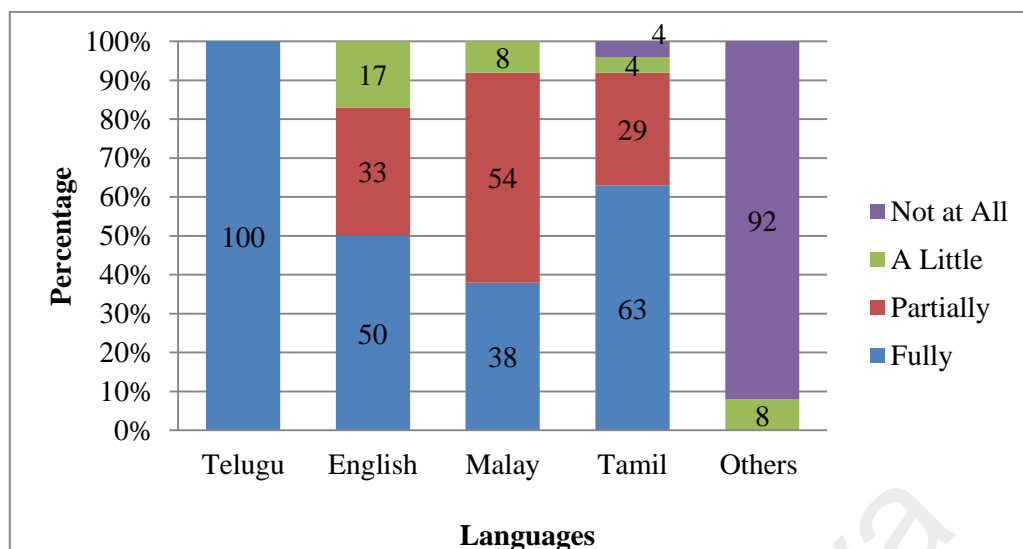
**Graph 4.9 Language(s) Use in a Conversation with Friends and Acquaintances
(Age Group 26-40)**

Based on Graph 4.9, the language with the highest percentage of respondents in the age group 26-40 being able to use fully is English (80%), followed by Telugu (53%), Malay (47%), Tamil (30%) and Other (Mandarin and Russian) (10%). The highest percentage of language which was marked by the respondents for being able to use it partially in a conversation with friends and acquaintances is Malay (50%) followed by Telugu and Tamil both at 30% and English at 20%. The languages which the respondents answered that they can use only a little are Tamil (33%), Telugu (10%) and Malay (3%). Language(s) which were marked by the respondents in this group for not being able to use it at all are Others (90%) and Telugu and Tamil both at 7%.



**Graph 4.10 Language(s) Use in a Conversation with Friends and Acquaintances
(Age Group 41-55)**

In contrast with the previous two figures, Figure 4.10 shows that the respondents in the age group 41-55 marked Telugu (94%) as the language which they can fully use in a conversation with friends and acquaintances, followed by Tamil (67%) and English and Malay (61%). The highest percentage of language which was marked by the respondents for being able to use it partially in a conversation with friends and acquaintances is English (39%) followed by Malay at 33% and Tamil at 22%. The languages which the respondents answered that they can use only a little are Tamil (11%) and Telugu and Malay (6%) respectively. No other language(s) were marked by this age group for being used in a conversation with friends and acquaintances.



Graph 4.11 Language(s) Use in a Conversation with Friends and Acquaintances

(Age Group 56 >)

Based on Figure 4.11, all (100%) respondents can use Telugu fully in a conversation with friends and acquaintances followed by Tamil (63%), English (50%) and Malay (38%). The language with the highest percentage of respondents who are able to use the language partially is Malay (54%) followed by English at 33% and Tamil at 29%. The languages which the respondents answered that they can use only a little are English (17%), Malay and Other (Mandarin) both at 8% respectively and Tamil (4%). Languages which respondents stated of not using at all are Tamil (4%) and Others (92%).

A number of significant differences can be seen from Figure 4.8 to Figure 4.11, such as the majority of respondents from the older age group are all able to use Telugu fully in a conversation with friends in comparison with respondents from the younger age group where we can observe a decline in use. Besides, the ability to use English fully has increased over the years especially among younger respondents. The ability to use Malay fully has shown a small increment among younger respondents. A high percentage of respondents however have stated that they can use Malay partially. Tamil

has shown a drastic decline over the years and respondents are also improving their use of other languages such as Mandarin and Russian.

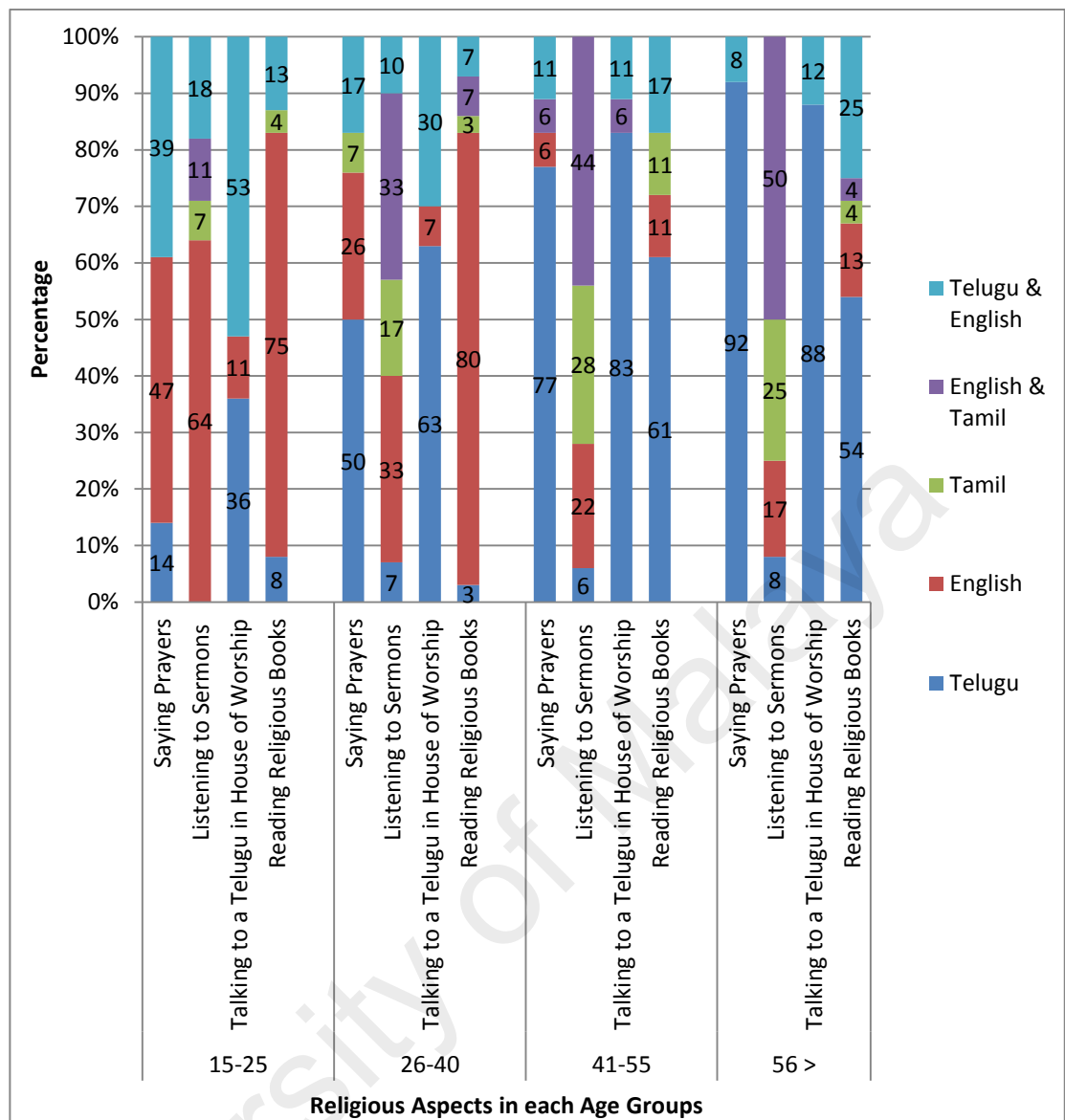
4.1.4 Language Use in the Religious Domain

It is important to take note of the religious demographic of the community as it affects the language choice of the respondents. This is due to the fact that the language medium used in Hinduism and Christianity in Malaysia differs and their believers' choices are very much dependent on the language available.

Hinduism is related to Sanskrit and since in Malaysia the majority of Hindus are Tamils; Tamil is widely used. Although there are Telugu temples in Klang Valley, the language is used limitedly. English has also been widely used to accommodate to all the Indian ethnic minorities as well as to keep up with the younger generation who is more fluent in this language.

On the other hand, as for the Christians, the majority of the churches in Klang Valley offer religious services in three main languages, i.e. English, Chinese and Tamil. In recent years services in Malay and sign language have been introduced. There is only one notable church which conducts services in Telugu, the Tamil Methodist Church, KL, and they are conducted by expatriates from Andhra Pradesh.

Based on the information above on religious demographic and the languages used in the religious domain, we can get a better understanding of the language choices made by each age group. The following questionnaire, seeks to find out the language(s) normally used by the respondents during religious or cultural activities such as when saying prayers, when listening to sermons/preaching, when singing/ listening to religious songs, when talking to another Telugu in a house of worship and when reading religious books.



Graph 4.12 Languages Used in Religious Domain

In the age group of 15 - 25, a majority of 47% of the respondents stated that they say prayers in Telugu followed by 39% who pray in Telugu & English and 14% who pray in English. The majority 64% stated that they listen to sermons in English followed by 18% who listen to sermons in Telugu & English, 11% answered English & Tamil and only 7% who listen to sermons in Tamil. 53% of the respondents state that they talk to a fellow Telugus in Telugu & English in a house of worship followed by 36 % of the respondents who stated that they use Telugu and 11% of respondents who use English. Majority of 74 % respondents stated that they use English when reading religious books,

13% of the respondents stated that they use Telugu & English whereas 8% use English and only 4% use Tamil.

Based on the age group of 26-40, a majority of 50% the respondents stated that they say prayers in Telugu followed by 26% who pray in English, 17% who pray in Telugu & English and 7% who pray in Tamil.

33% of respondents stated that they listen to sermons in English and English & Tamil respectively; followed by 17% who listen to sermons in Tamil, 10% indicated Telugu & English and only 7% listen to sermons in Telugu. 63% of the respondents stated that they talk to a fellow Telugu in Telugu in a house of worship followed by 30% of the respondents who stated that they use Telugu & English and 7% of respondents who use English. The majority of 80% respondents stated that they use English when reading religious books, followed by 7% of the respondents who read in Telugu & English and English & Tamil respectively, whereas only 3% use Tamil and Telugu respectively.

In the age group of 41-55, the majority of 77% of the respondents answered that they pray in Telugu followed by 11% respondents who pray in Telugu & English and 6% respondents who pray in English and English & Tamil respectively. 44% of the respondents have stated that they listen to sermon in English & Tamil, followed by 28% respondents who listen to sermons in Tamil, 22% respondents listen to them in English and only 6% listen to them in Telugu. As for talking with a fellow Telugu in a house of worship, the majority of 83% respondents have stated that they use Telugu when communicating, 11% use Telugu & English and only 6% use Tamil. Respondents from this age group have also recorded a higher percentage of use of Telugu when it comes to reading religious books. 61% of respondents stated that they use Telugu to read religious books followed by 17% respondents who use Telugu & English, and 11% of the respondents who use English and Tamil respectively.

There is a further increase in the use of Telugu in religious domain among the respondents from the age group of 56>. 92% of the respondents stated that they pray in Telugu and only 8% answered that they pray in Telugu & English. 50% of the respondents listen to sermons in English & Tamil followed by 25% who listen to them in Tamil, 17% respondents listen in English and only 8% who listen to them in Telugu. However, majority of 88% of respondents use Telugu when talking to a fellow Telugu in the house of worship followed by 12% who use Telugu & English. 54% stated that they use Telugu to read religious books followed by 25% of the respondents who use Telugu & English, 13% respondents who use English and 4% use Tamil and English and Tamil respectively.

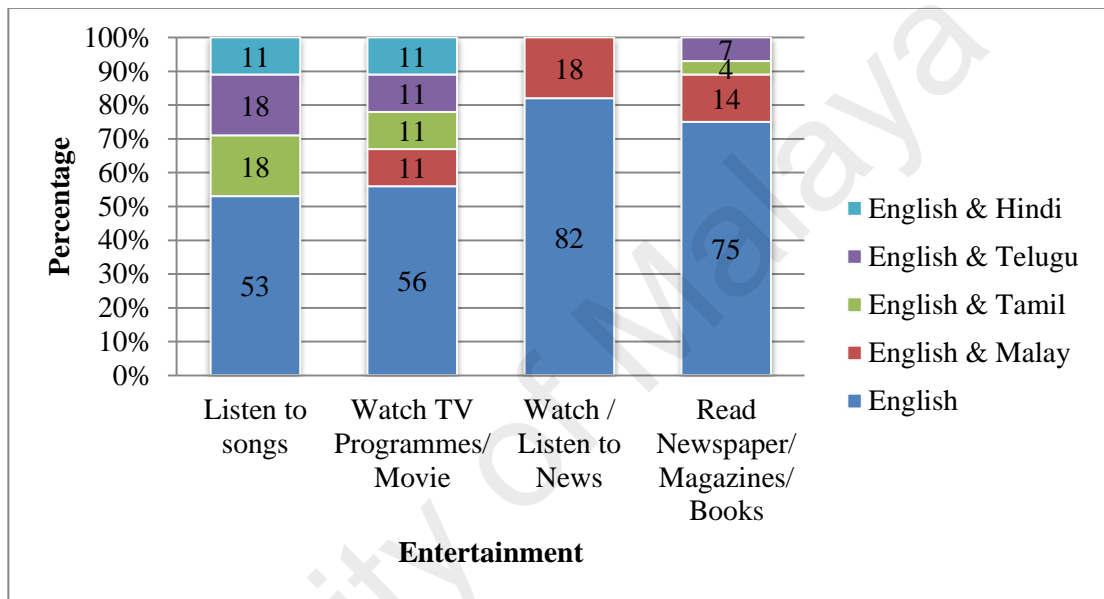
Based on the findings in Figure 4.12 there is a significant difference in the choice of language between the younger and older respondents in all four aspects of religious domain. English and a mixture of English and Telugu are predominant among the younger ones in contrast with the older ones who use predominantly Telugu.

It is interesting to notice that the use of Telugu when saying prayers and talking to a fellow Telugu in house worship is lower among the respondents of the younger age group. Although, Telugu is still used when saying prayers and when talking to a Telugu in the house worship, there is a noticeable rise in the percentage of respondents who mix Telugu with English in these two situations.

As for listening to sermons, there is a noticeable shift from the older respondents who use more Tamil to younger respondents who use more English. As mentioned earlier, the majority of the Hindus in Malaysia is made up of Tamils, thus Tamil is widely used when delivering sermons. However, to fit the current generation, English is normally used to cater not only to younger generation but also to people from different ethnicities. There is drastic decline in the use of Telugu in reading religious books among the

younger generation as well and this is due to reading proficiency of the language (refer to table 3.9 Telugu Language Proficiency). However there is a slight increment in the use of Telugu in reading religious books among the respondents from the age group of 15-25 compared to age group of 26-40. This is probably due to the slight increment in their language proficiency compared to latter mentioned age group. (Refer to table 3.9)

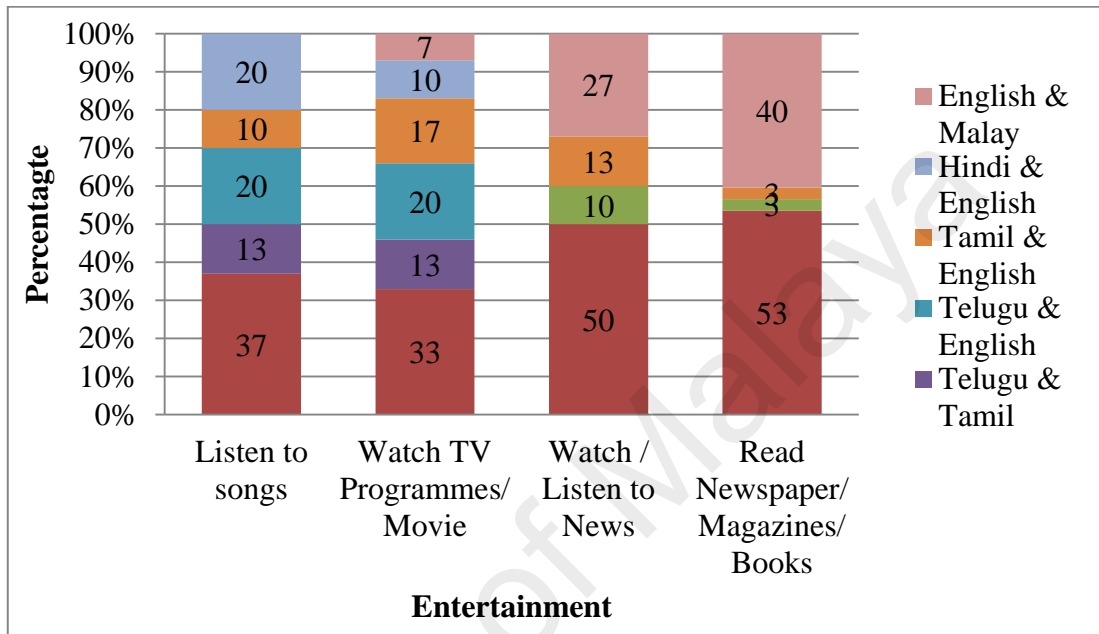
4.1.5 Language Use in the Entertainment Domain



Graph 4.13 Language Used for Entertainment (Age Group 15-25)

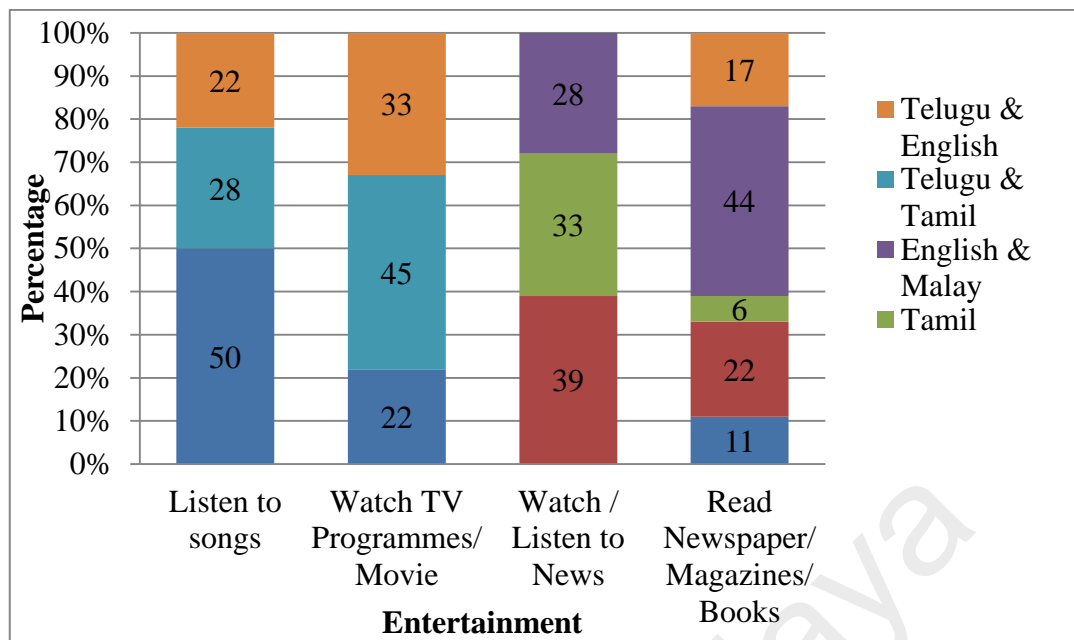
Graph 4.13 shows language use in the entertainment domain for the age group 15-25. English is the language most used in all aspects of entertainment followed by English & Malay, English & Tamil, then English & Telugu and finally English & Hindi. When asked about the preferred language in which they listen to songs, the majority of 53% respondents answered English followed by 18% respondents who answered English & Tamil and English & Telugu and 11% who answered English & Hindi. As for watching TV programmes/ movies the majority of 56% prefer to watch in English followed by 11% who answered English & Malay, another 11% English & Tamil, then English & Telugu and finally English & Hindi respectively. The majority of 82% of the

respondents answered that they prefer to watch/listen to news in English followed by 18% who prefer to watch in English & Malay. 75 % prefer to read newspapers/magazines/books in English followed by 14% in English & Malay, 7% in English & Telugu and 4% in English & Tamil



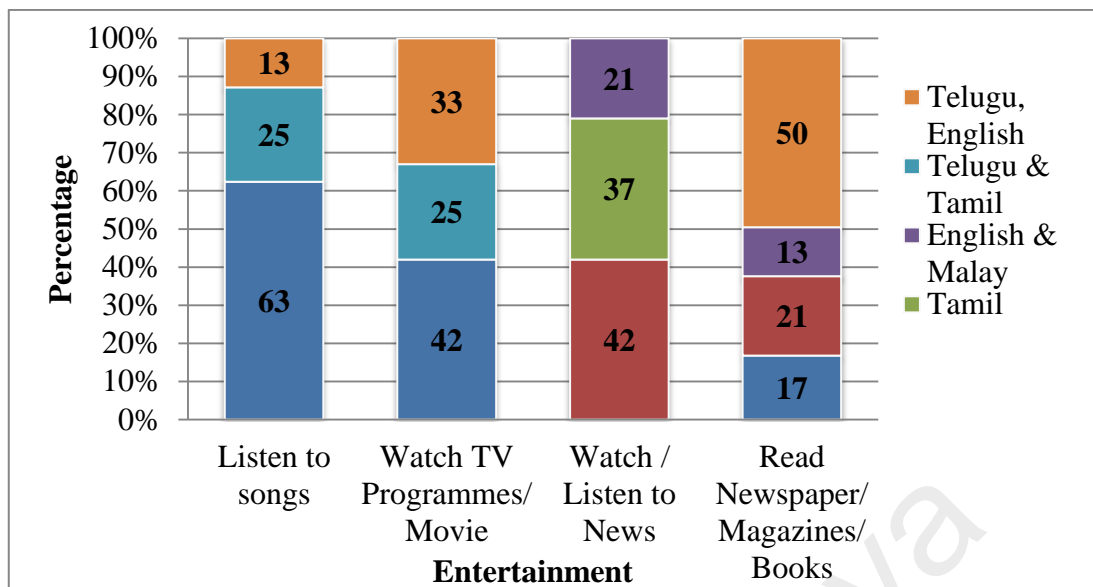
Graph 4.14 Language Used for Entertainment (Age Group 26-40)

Based on Graph 4.14 a majority of 37% of the respondents answered that they prefer to listen to songs in English followed by 20% in Telugu & English and Hindi & English respectively, 13% in Telugu & Tamil and 10% in Tamil and English. When asked about the preferred language in which they watch TV programmes/movies, a majority of 33% answered English followed by 20% Telugu & English, 17% Tamil & English, 13% Telugu & Tamil, 10% Hindi & English and only 7% English & Malay. A majority of 50% of the respondents answered that they prefer to watch/listen to news in English followed by 27% who preferred to watch in English & Malay, 13% Tamil & English and 10% in Tamil. 53 % prefer to read newspaper/magazines/books in English followed by 40% in English & Malay, 3% in Tamil & English and Tamil respectively.



Graph 4.15 Language Used for Entertainment (Age Group 41-55)

In contrast with the findings of the two previous age groups, respondents from the age group of 41-55 show an increase in the use Telugu in the entertainment domain especially when listening to songs and watching TV programmes. A majority of 50% of the respondents answered that they prefer to listen to songs in Telugu followed by 28% in Telugu & Tamil and 22% in Telugu & English. When asked about the preferred language to watch TV programmes/movies, a majority of 45% stated Telugu & Tamil followed by 33% Telugu & English and 22% Telugu. 39% of the respondents prefer to watch/listen to news in English followed by 33% in Tamil and 28% in English & Malay. 44 % prefer to read newspapers/magazines/books in English & Malay followed by 22% in English, 17% in Telugu & English, 11% in Telugu and 6% in Tamil.



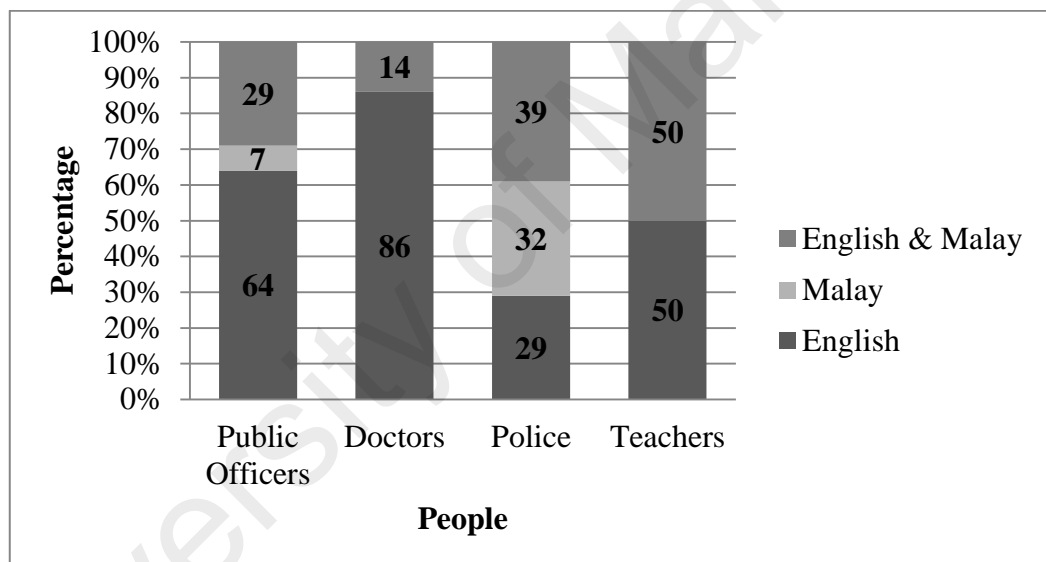
Graph 4.16 Language Used for Entertainment (Age Group 56 >)

Respondents from the age group 56 > show a further increase in the use of Telugu in the entertainment domain. The majority of 63% of the respondents answered that they prefer to listen to songs in Telugu followed by 25% in Telugu & Tamil and 13% in Telugu & English. When asked about the preferred language to watch TV programmes/movies, a majority of 42% stated Telugu followed by 33% Telugu & English and 25% Telugu & Tamil. 42% of respondents prefer to watch/listen to news in English followed by 37% in Tamil and 21% in English & Malay. 50% prefer to read newspapers/magazines/books in Telugu & English followed by 21% in English, 17% in Telugu and 13% in English & Malay.

Based on all the graphs from Graph 4.13 to Graph 4.16, a few significant differences in the language choice across the age groups can be clearly seen. Although the use of Telugu among the older respondents in this domain is not as high compared to other domains, it is relatively higher than that of the respondents from the younger age group. Especially when listening to songs and watching TV programmes/ movies the older ones prefer Telugu compared to other languages. The younger ones on the other hand,

prefer English for these two aspects. The use of Tamil is also recorded to be higher among the older ones compared to the younger ones. Besides, the use of Hindi started to be popular among the younger ones. As for watching/listening to news and reading newspapers/magazines/books, English has been predominantly used across all age groups, although the use of English shows a drastic increment among the younger generation compared to the older ones. It is also important to note that the majority of the older ones prefer to read newspapers/magazines/books in Telugu & English compared to the younger ones who prefer to do it in English & Malay.

4.1.6 Language Use in the Official Domain



Graph 4.17 Language Used for Official Settings (Age Group 15-25)

Based on Figure 4.1.17, the majority of the respondents, 64%, answered that they speak in English with public officers followed by 29% who use English & Malay and 7% answered Malay. With the doctors, 86% of the respondents stated that they use English followed by 14% who stated English & Malay. 39% respondents stated that they use English & Malay with Police followed by 32% who use Malay and 29% who use English. 50 % of the respondents stated that they speak English and English & Malay with their teachers.

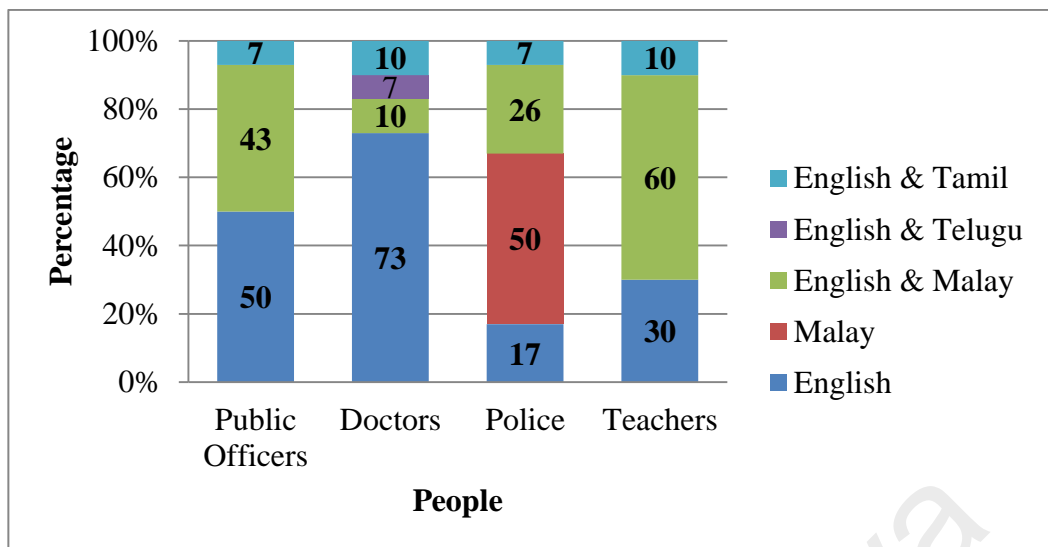
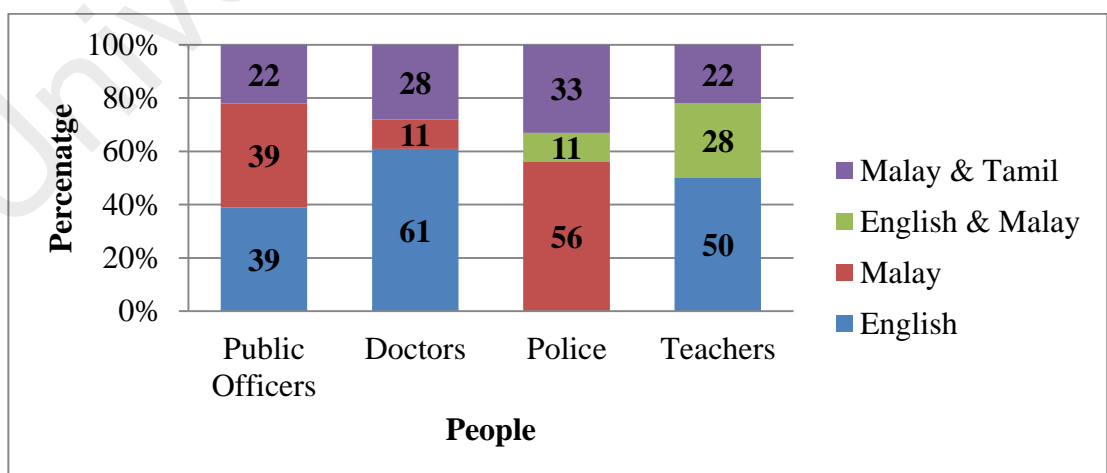


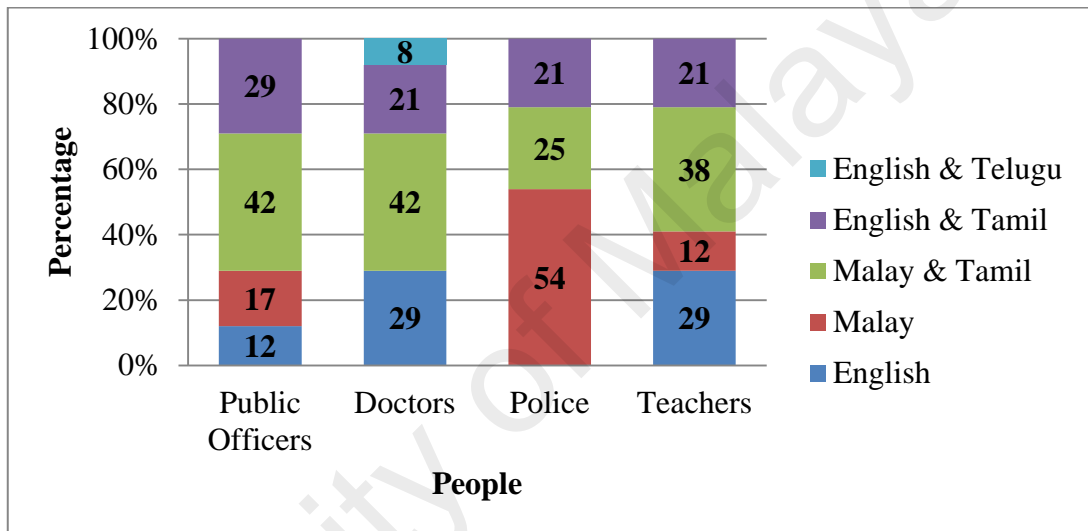
Figure 4.18 Language Used for Official Settings (Age Group 26-40)

A majority of 50% respondents use English with public officers followed by 43% who use English & Malay and only 7% use English & Tamil. 73% respondents stated that they use English with doctors, 10% use English & Malay and English & Tamil respectively and 7% use English & Telugu. With police, a majority of 50% of the respondents use Malay followed by 26% who use English & Malay, 17% who use English and 7% who use English & Tamil. 60% respondents use English & Malay with teachers followed by 30% use English and 10% use English & Tamil.



Graph 4.19 Language Used for Official Settings (Age Group 41-50)

Based on Figure 4.1.19, 39% of respondents answered that they speak in English and Malay respectively with public officers, followed by 22% who use Malay& Tamil. With the doctors, 61% of the respondents stated that they use English followed by 28% who stated Malay & Tamil and 11% Malay. The majority of 56% respondents stated that they use Malay with Police followed by 33% who use Malay & Tamil and only 11% who use English & Malay. 50 % of the respondents stated that they use English with teachers followed by 28% who use English & Malay and 22% who use Malay & Tamil.



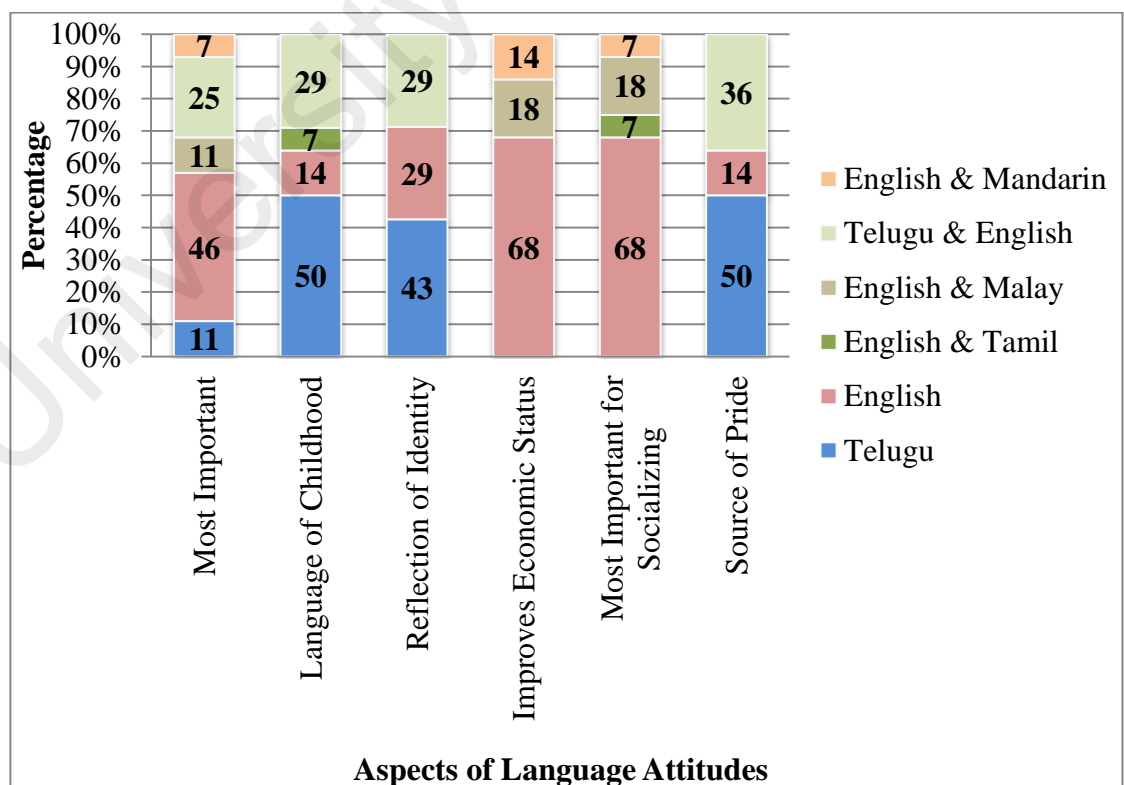
Graph 4.20 Language Used for Official Settings (Age Group 56 >)

In the age group 56 >, a majority of 42% respondents have stated that they use Malay & Tamil with Public Officers followed by 29% who use English & Tamil, 17% who use Malay and only 12 % who use English. With the doctors, 42% of the respondents stated that they use Malay & Tamil followed by 29% who stated that they use English, 21% who use English & Tamil and 8% who use English & Telugu. The majority of 54% of the respondents stated that they use Malay with Police followed by 25% who use Malay & Tamil and 21% who use English & Tamil. 38 % of the respondents stated that they use Malay & Tamil with teachers followed by 29% who use English 21% who use English & Tamil and 12% who use Malay.

Based on Graph 4.17 to Graph 4.20, it can be clearly seen that there is a rise in the use of Malay among the older age group compared to the younger age group. The older age group also uses a lot of Tamil compared to the younger ones. English is used more among the respondents of the younger age group compared to the older one. This again is probably due to proficiency. Surprising there are a number of respondents from the older age group, who have stated they use Telugu with doctors. Although small in numbers this shows that the use of Telugu outside the home domain exists among the older respondents.

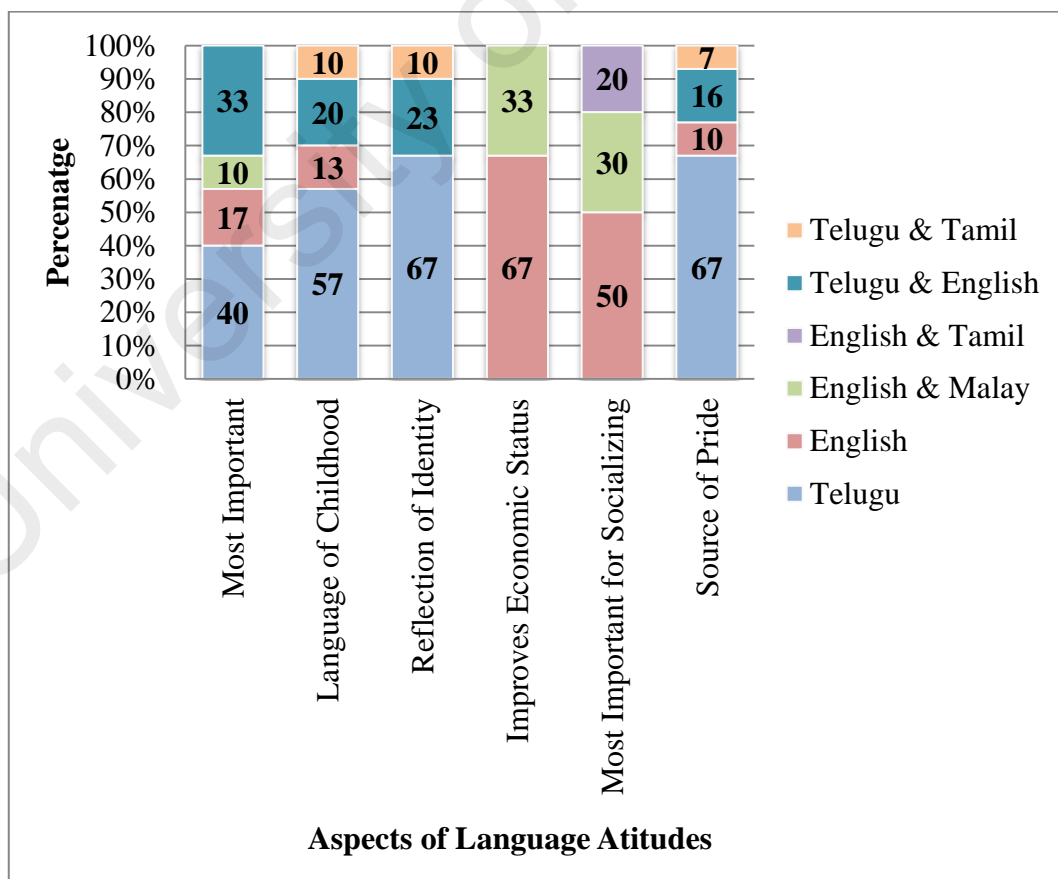
4.2 Language Attitudes

This section presents findings on the respondents' opinions and attitudes towards Telugu and also some commonly spoken languages in Malaysia such as English, Malay, Tamil and Others. The findings for this section are collected from part C of the questionnaire.



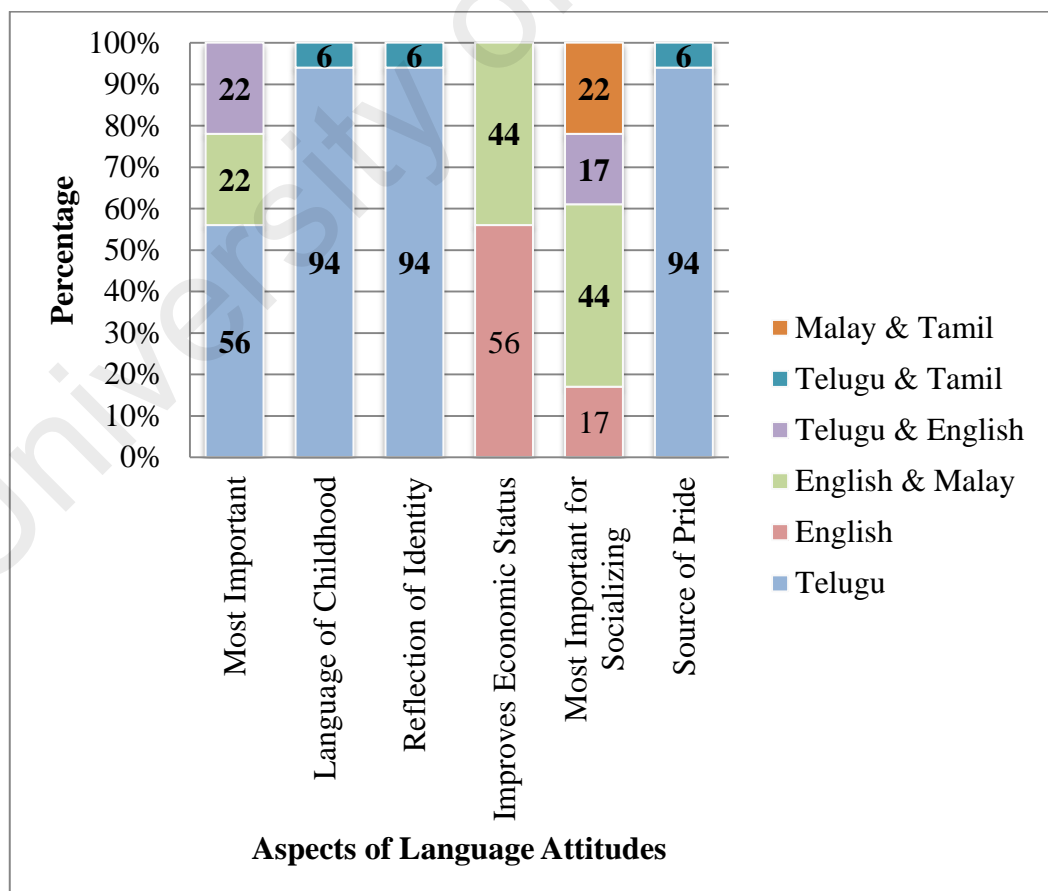
Graph 4.21 Language Attitudes (Age Group 15-25)

Based on Graph 4.21, a majority of 46% of the respondents stated that English is the most important language followed by 25% who stated Telugu & English, 11% Telugu and another 11% English & Malay respectively. When asked about their language of childhood, 50% answered Telugu followed by 29% Telugu & English, 14% English and only 7% English & Tamil. A majority of 43% stated that Telugu reflects their identity, followed by 29% who stated English and another 29% stated Telugu & English. 68% of the respondents stated that English improves economic status, followed by 18% who stated English & Malay and 14% stated English & Mandarin. When asked about which language(s) is/are most important for socializing, 68% answered English, 18% answered English & Malay, 7% answered English & Tamil and another 7% answered English & Mandarin. A majority of 50% of the respondents answered Telugu is their source of pride followed by 36 % who stated Telugu & English, and 14% who stated English.



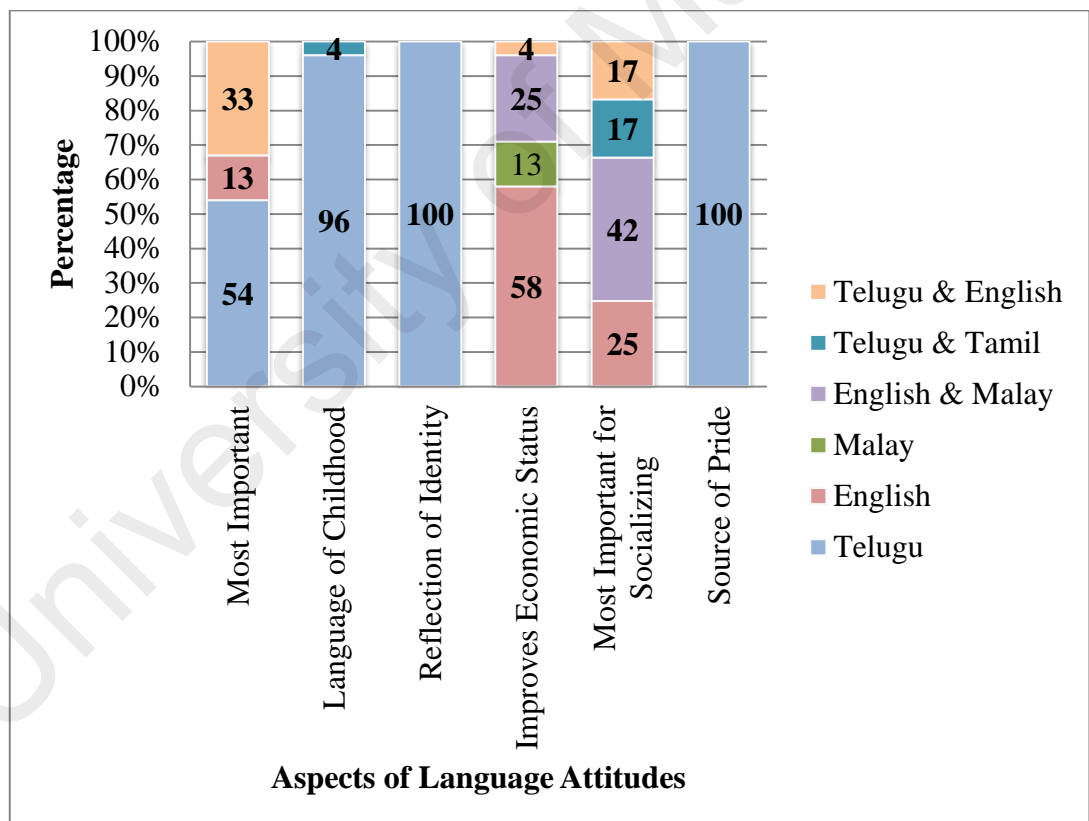
Graph 4.22 Language Attitudes (Age Group 26-40)

Based on Graph 4.22 a majority of 40% of the respondents stated that English is the most important language followed by 33% who stated Telugu & English, 17% English and 10% English & Malay. When asked about their language of childhood, 57% answered Telugu followed by 20% Telugu & English, 13% English and only 10% Telugu & Tamil. The majority of 67% stated that Telugu reflects their identity, followed by 23% who stated Telugu & English and 10% Telugu & Tamil. 67% of the respondents stated that English improves economic status, followed by 33% who stated English & Malay. When asked about which language(s) is/are most important for socializing, 50% answered English, 30% answered English & Malay and 20% answered English & Tamil. The majority of 67% of the respondents answered Telugu to be their source of pride, followed by 16 % who stated Telugu & English, 10% who stated English and 7% stated Telugu & Tamil.



Graph 4.23 Language Attitudes (Age Group 41-55)

In this age group, the majority of 56 % of the respondents stated that Telugu is the most important language followed by 22% who stated Telugu & English and another 22% stated English & Malay. When asked about their language of childhood as well as reflection of identity, 94% answered Telugu followed by only 6% answered Telugu & Tamil. 56% of the respondents stated that English improves economic status, followed by 44% who stated English & Malay. When asked about which language(s) is/are most important for socializing, 44% answered English & Malay, 22% answered Malay & Tamil and 17% answered English and another 17% answered Telugu & English. The majority of 94% of the respondents answered Telugu to be their source of pride followed by only 6 % who stated Telugu & Tamil.



Graph 4.24 Language Attitudes (Age Group 56 >)

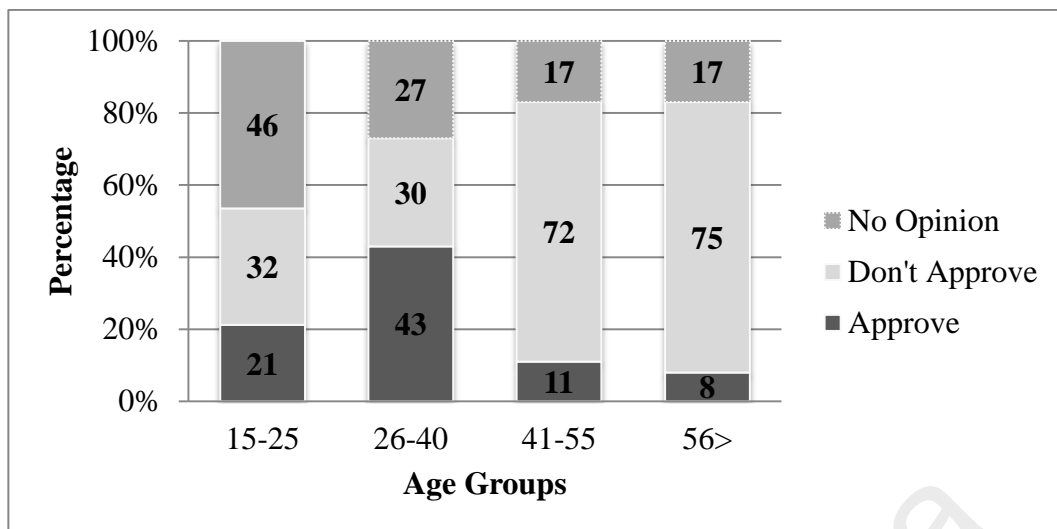
The majority of 54% of the respondents from the age group 56 > stated that Telugu is the most important language followed by 33% who stated Telugu & English and 13%

English. When asked about their language of childhood 96% stated Telugu and 4% stated Telugu & Tamil. 100% of the respondents stated Telugu reflects their identity. 58% of respondents stated English improves economic status, followed by 25% who stated English & Malay, 13% Malay and only 4% Telugu & English. When asked about which language(s) is/are most important for socializing, 42% answered English & Malay, 25% answered English, 17% answered Telugu & Tamil and another 17% answered Telugu & English. All respondents answered Telugu to be their source of pride.

Based on Graph 4.21 to Graph 4.24, it can be seen that all respondents across the age groups hold a high sense of pride towards their mother tongue although it decreases among the younger respondents. This is evident from the response given especially to the questions about which language(s) is/are most important, which reflects your identity and is/a source of pride.

Besides, it also can be seen that all respondents are aware of the importance of English and Malay in aspects such as socializing and improving economic status. However, the younger age group places higher importance on English compared to the older one who place higher importance on Tamil and Malay in these two aspects.

When asked if speaking Telugu gives an identity as a Telugu in Question 11 (Part C), the majority answered yes with an exception of 3 respondents who answered no and gave reasons such as 'one is considered Telugu when one practices the culture and tradition', 'One can be identified as a Telugu from the name and family name' and 'the family name and the tradition play an important role in identifying a Telugu'.



Graph 4.25 Attitudes towards Inter-Marriage

Graph 4.25 presents the findings on respondents' attitudes towards inter-marriage across all age groups. A majority of 46% of the respondents from the age group 15-25 stated they have no opinion probably due to their young age in which they are not prepared for marriage, followed by 32% who don't approve and 21% who approve inter-marriage. According to the respondents from the age group 26-40, 43% stated that they approve inter-marriage followed by 30% who don't approve and 27% who have no opinion. 72% of the respondents from the age group 41-55 don't approve inter-marriage followed by 17% with no opinion and 11% who approve. As for the age group of 56>, a majority of 75% of the respondents stated that they don't approve inter-marriage, 17% have no opinion and 8% approve.

When asked to explain briefly their attitude towards inter-marriage in question 14, several similar reasons were given on why they approve, don't approve and have no opinion.

Based on the graph above, the majority of the respondents in general have stated that they do not approve inter-marriage. Some of the reasons given were:

- ‘Because it might affect ones culture’
- ‘Inter-marriage is the main reason for deterioration of the culture and language’
- ‘One may not continue the tradition and the language may be lost throughout time’

Next come the respondents who have answered No Opinion and below are some of the reasons given

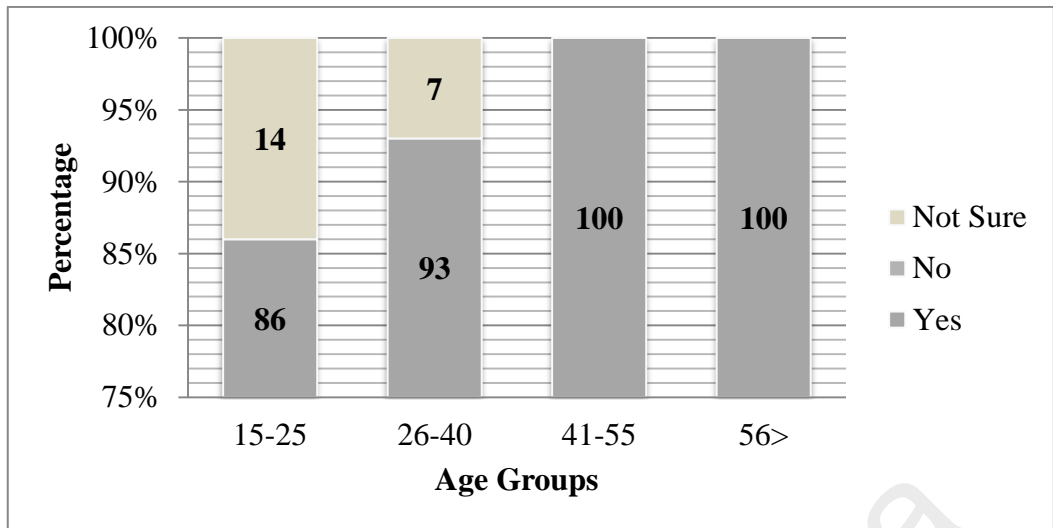
- ‘I’m too young to be married. It’s not the time for me to think about it’
- ‘It depends on the family’s tradition and principles. If the family allows it then it’s okay’
- ‘It depends on fate and destiny’

Lastly some respondents said that they approve inter-marriage and below are some of the reasons given:

- ‘Everyone is equal in god’s eyes. There should not be inequality among human race’
- ‘As long as one can preserve one culture then it shouldn’t be a problem’

It is also interesting to notice that across all age groups, all answered yes to question 16 on whether they want their children to learn to use Telugu and the reasons given in question 17 are for heritage and communication with family members

Question 20 asked the respondents if they think it is important to preserve Telugu language being a Malaysian Telugu. The respondents were asked to tick Yes, No or Not Sure. Figure 4.26 illustrates the findings for the question above.



Graph 4.26 Importance of Preserving Telugu Language

Based on the graph above, the majority of the respondents from all age groups stated yes, that it is important to preserve Telugu language. 86% from the age group 15-25, 93% from the age group 26-40 and 100% from the age groups of 41-55 as well as 56 > stated Yes. Whereas, 14 % from the age group of 15-25 and 7% from the age group 26-40 stated Not Sure. It can be clearly seen that the respondents from the older age group thinks it is more important to preserve Telugu language compared to the younger respondents.

The majority of the respondents explained why they have answered ‘Yes’ in the question 21. They answered ‘Yes’ because they think the language is one of the main indicators of Telugu Culture and if it is not preserved not only will the language be wiped away but also the culture and tradition.

4.3 Reasons for Language Shift or Maintenance

This section presents and discusses the findings for language shift or maintenance among the Telugu Community in Klang Valley. As discussed in chapter 3 some of the factors identified by scholars such as bilingualism or multilingualism, socio-economic

changes, the economic power of language, government regulations the impact of education and migration were clearly mentioned by interviewees. The findings for this section have been obtained through interviews conducted with 10 interviewees.

Continuing from the second interview question which asked the interviewees if there are any differences in language use now and before, in terms of Telugu language proficiency, slang, and accent, Question 3 aims to find out why the differences occur. All the interviewees mentioned that there are significant differences in terms of the language used between the younger and older generation.

Finally question 4 asks about the respondents' opinion on the Telugu Association of Malaysia (TAM)'s efforts in creating awareness among the young generation in preserving Telugu and how is the response from the community. This section will present extracts of the interviews in line with questions 3 and 4.

The reasons given by the interviewees can be categorized into 4 factors out of 6 factors outlined in the theoretical framework by Sercombe, 2001. The factors are impact of education, bilingualism or multilingualism, the economic power of language, migration and maintenance and revival

4.3.1 Impact of Education

Extract 4. 10

| | |
|----------|---|
| I | : So uncle can you explain why this happens as in the difference? |
| S2 | : Language actually, if you want to talk fluency of a language, there must be an institution to teach you. On your own you can't speak. Even in a family if you were brought up by a Telugu family but if we don't have a written language taught by the previous generation you can't speak on your own, you must have someone who influences you. |

I : So you think the difference has occurred because there's no institution?

S2 : Yea that's it. No institution, like if I don't go to English school I can't speak English. Same thing.

I : So you are saying there's no proper education?

S2 : Yes there is no proper education and these things can't be stopped if people put a practice to read Telugu otherwise just by talking, you won't be able to speak a good language, reading is important. When you read you can read all the pure words, they don't mix with other languages.

Extract 4. 11

I : Okay sir, can you tell me why these differences occur?

S7 : Ok because the old timers, they had school. They went to Telugu schools but after that, when they shifted to town area, there are no Telugu schools. There are only Tamil school, Malay and English schools, so they can't learn, as they go to other schools they have no time to learn. At home they are very busy with work, parents also go to work in the morning and only come at night, the children often speak in other languages like Tamil, Malay and English. So they don't get time to learn Telugu.

I : So you think education is the main reason. Any other reasons sir?

S7 : Mainly because of schools la and ...

Extract 4. 12

I : Any other reason that you know of?

S8 : Other than that because of gathering with friend la normally for the kids, because the language they use daily in school is English. No other languages. In KL mostly the kids use English and don't use their mother tongue. Even the Tamils are the same. Telugu also same, when they go to school they talk In English only.

Extract 4. 13

I : ... when the younger ones speak Telugu, is there any difference compared to last time when they speak Telugu. Compared to our parents time?

S9 : Yes, because nowadays the kids are going to school and they tend to mix with English language a lot and then Tamil also in between. At least English okay la but when they are combining Telugu with Tamil it's very bad I think.

I : Education. Can you please explain on that?

S9 : Education... I mean... Education wise because every day they are going to school talking in English, talking in Malay... because of that. and they are communication with other people also.. and so English words and Malay words come in between.

I : So you think those things influence Telugu?

S9 : Yes.

Extract 4. 14

S10 : ...The other reason if you were to ask me, unlike those day we had POL classes as the community was big there so you could have it but here i know TAM has taken some initiative but i don't think it has reached out to the largest community. They are having classes here and there but i don't think many know about the classes, so effort needs to be taken on that part.

I : You were talking about education, the lack of formal education. Is that right?

S10 : Yes yes! We can't have formal education. Formal education means full time classes which we can't have it here.

I : Sir you said parents don't emphasize. Why parents don't emphasize?

S10 : So it's actually too much of competition out there. It's a very competitive world. Parents emphasize to the current need they need English and BM more than Telugu right now because otherwise they feel they'd be left out in the competition. Competition in the school for example, all the knowledge that they learn in school is all either in BM or English not in Telugu. Resources in Telugu if you were to ask me are very limited.

I : So sir it's also quite related to education the way I see you talking. Education and finance. I mean career as they need to be ready to face career and education world out there. Is that right?

S10 : Yes exactly!

Based on Extract 4.10 - Extract 4.14, 4 out of 10 interviewees mentioned education being a factor for the changes mentioned in the 2nd question of the interview. The majority of the interviewees mentioned, not having a formal Telugu education in Malaysia as there used to be, has contributed largely to the shift. Besides, Extract 12 and 13 mention how children are influenced by the languages used at school. The media of instructions used in public schools attended by the majority are Malay and English. Thus, the students use these languages often and unknowingly they infiltrate into their mother tongue. Extract 14 on the other hand mentions that English is very important in the education field and in gaining knowledge to survive in the rather competitive environment of Klang Valley.

4.3.2 Bilingualism or Multilingualism

Extract 4.15

| | |
|----------|---|
| I | : Aunty, do you have any other reason why people mix a lot with other languages? |
| S3 | : Because influence la, by other races languages. |
| I | : Because Malaysia has many races? |
| S3 | : Ah, yes so many races, so many languages. |

Extract 4.16

| | |
|----------|--|
| I | : So why do you think these differences occur like them mixing this Telugu Language? |
| S5 | : Well just now, I said, we are living in multicultural society where in Malaysia itself we can see we are speaking in 3 different languages Malay, English and also Chinese. So Telugu when they are exposed to these kind of languages they tend to mix those languages in it. |

Extract 4.15 and 4.16 mention the influence of a multicultural nation. Two respondents stated that it is inevitable for the changes to occur as when a speaker is competent in more than one language, they will somehow reflect in the mother tongue.

4.3.3 Economic Power of Language

Extract 4.17

I : I want to ask the third question sir. I think which pretty much you've explained earlier little bit, but I want to ask just to make it clear, why do you think the differences actually occur? (Q3)

S1 : I think in Klang Valley, generally I mean most of the people, English is common lah, they speak English at home or wherever they go something like that ...especially who are highly educated parents, whereby they are into corporate sectors like myself working private companies not for government we know how important English is. We know that children must be able speak English, is not an easy language actually you know...So, parents really discourage their children to speak other languages, doesn't matter mother tongue or whatever you call, then end of the day it is about survival. You see because in Klang Valley, you can't survive with the same/chain salary you earn in rural area. The cost of living is very much high here, so the competitiveness is different.

I : So, you are saying because it, being very competitive in Klang Valley parents are actually encouraging them to speak more in English so they can survive later when they get into the career world correct?

S1 : Yup! Exactly!

Extract 4.18

I : What gives the biggest impact in affecting the language use now? Which factors affect the most?

S6 : I think it's career and financial reasons. Well English is very important to get a well-paying job you see because paper qualification alone is not enough nowadays.

Extract 4.19

I : Let's move on the next question. Why do you think the language has changed or why the differences occur?

S8 : Because of awareness. Parents never teach their kids la. That's the most important lah.

I : Any other reason?

S8 : Other reason will be because in Klang Valley they think Telugu is not important, maybe... it's not important and even for job vacancy they don't require Telugu language. They only ask for Mandarin and English.

I : You mean for work right in the future?

S8 : Yes for work purpose. Yes correct.

Extract 4.20

I : Why do you think these differences actually occur?

S10 : So one thing is that the economic factor in terms of you see Telugu is a language they speak at home but it does not make value when they learn for their future growth in terms of profession/career, so they always feel it's not necessary to speak their mother tongue, they prefer to speak English which is widely available to be used in corporate world. 2nd is that parents are not emphasizing it.

According to Extracts 4.17 to Extract 4.20, interviewees have mentioned that Telugu has no economic value whereby it is neither required to get a job nor for career development. English on the hand is highly valued because the language is in demand for professional development. Due to this, parents themselves encourage their children to be more competent in English Language risking their mother tongue.

4.3.4 Migration

Extract 4.21

I : Can you please explain why the differences occur? Why they have changed in terms of their language use?

S4 : Because in early days we lived in a big Telugu community so Telugu language used was more accurate and clear, but when we came to the town we don't have such big communities. We don't usually get together and we socialize very less. So when we socialize less of course other language will creep into our main language you see and we are not aware about it. We just speak it as what we think as normal and the younger generation and new generation catches up with it and they introduce more Malay English and other things.

Extract 4.22

I : ... any other reason sir?

S7 : ...and here in town the outsiders nobody really speaks in Telugu, in village they all spoke in Telugu, the Chinese and even other Indians all can also speak Telugu well because they had schools but now as the new millennium they all have forgotten about it.

According to the two extracts above, interviewees have mentioned that when Telugus migrated from the estates and villages to the city, they scattered everywhere. This has caused the community to split and has indirectly affected language use. They have no close knit community where the language can be used anymore.

4.3.5 Other Responses

Some other response given by the interviewees was that Telugu is changing due to modernization, as the modern community in town tends to bring a lot English words into Telugu. Besides, some said that many don't know the importance of the language in the current context and the purpose of the language beside communication with family members and identity. The fact that parents don't inculcate the importance of the mother tongue has also been stated by some interviewees. Below are some examples from the extracts:

Extract 4.23

I : In terms of speaking right, do you see people nowadays, the younger generation speaks a bit differently or they mix a lot or anything?

S1 : I think that'll definitely be there lah because it's a... for me, it is more about modernization lah, the development in the language just like Malay lah. Malay

today, there is so much development I would say that as development nothing wrong or right. Malay today use so much of English right. Most of the words in Malay are English words translated from English, so if they can use that and they are proud of that, why not we? It's all about modernization, so, that's how the Telugu's in India are seeing that

Extract 4.24

I : Any other reason sir?

S1 : Usually is that la, but they don't see any relevance la, how do they know the language can be relevant to the next generation because the educated parents always have the mindset about moving forward. Think about the situation in 20 years or 30 years from now. They don't think about this now... So you can't compare the situation now and say that Telugu is still relevant and is still required. So for me, I can hardly see ...of how Telugu would still be relevant 20 years from now...

Extract 4.25

I : Why do you think these differences actually occur?

S10 : second is that parents are not emphasizing it.

I : Why do you think parents are not emphasizing it?

S10 : It's really difficult to tell because as I say parents also involve too much in the corporate world and they have forgotten their own mother tongue...

When asked which factor poses the greatest challenge, the majority however, have stated that having no formal education is the main reason for the declining standards of Telugu proficiency among the Telugus in Klang Valley. However, some interviewees have mentioned that with the current efforts taken to have Telugu classes and the internet, the younger generation may slowly pick up and revive the language back to what it used to be.

4.3.6 Language Maintenance Effort

Extract 4.26

I : Any other reasons..?

S4 : ...the other factor which is very encouraging is the internet and all that. Lately, the younger generation is slowly getting more exposed to the language hopefully they'll slowly catch up because it takes time. With the internet and all that, the language can be improved for time to come but they must see the importance of it because Telugu is not a language where you need in order to get a job or what. It's only to keep up the language and to communicate only. We don't have newspapers and we don't read and write here so it's just communication purpose only, so yea I think maybe internet can help just to keep up with the language.

Based on the extract above, Speaker 4 mentions that with the help of internet, the language can slowly be revived to the original state despite the fact that it is not widely used.

Question 4 asked how TAM is doing in creating awareness among the younger generation in preserving the Telugu Language and how is the community responding to the campaign. Based on the responses given by the interviewees, measures have been taken by TAM to improve the language proficiency and cultural awareness among the

younger generation. The main focus of TAM in recent years has been channelled towards Telugu education. However, based on some responses, some obstacles have been reported such as lack of parents' cooperation in sending the children to the classes, the fact that the campaign has not reached to everyone and finally the lack of awareness on the importance of learning the mother tongue. The interviewees gave mix responses given by regarding the efforts taken by TAM and on how well the community is responding. (Refer to appendix)

Extract 4.27

I : What do you think about Telugu association? Are they doing a good job in creating awareness among the young generation?

S7 : ...so as for what we are doing now, my ex-president, four years back has started having Telugu classes already, so we want to have this all over Malaysia, so today 50% of the students have already graduated from the Telugu class.. It has been 7 years already that we have started this initiative, so these children know how to speak pure Telugu.

I : And are they doing a good job? Like you said about 50% have passed well?

S7 : Yes. They can write can speak fluent Telugu just like how our parents speak.

I : Not 100% you said 50% correct? 50% is still very high, good job.

S7 : Yes... Now our motive is on learning the Telugu language so we focus on the students. Now we don't focus much on doing shows...

I : How is the respond from the community sir? Is it good or bad?

S7 : Now they are coming forward.... Now the new comers have registered. 67 students. We have classes but the problem is we don't have enough teachers. Since now that we have promoted the classes all seem to know about it and the parents are very happy and they are coming forward. The members and the non-members too, they are all coming forward to register their children.

Extract 4.28

I : What do you think of TAM, are they doing a great job in creating awareness among the young generation in preserving the Telugu language?

S4 : I think they are trying to their level best because our community is dispersed, they are not in a very concentrated, they find it a problem to bring the community all together to study the language as it will be quite a financial burden to those in the association because we don't get any contribution. ..but I think lately from what I've seen they are doing a good job because most of the association branches they are encouraging them to have Telugu classes and of course other religious activities like 'bhajans' and all that, so this I think will slowly uplift their identity, except for some small functions here and there, no other opportunities where they

are able to mix but they are doing a good job in a way because despite the constraints, financially and the teachers I think they are doing fantastic job compared to the first 15 years, I think now they are doing a better job.

I : How do you think the community is responding to the campaign?

S4 : The community especially the younger ones when they see other races being so staunch, I think they are getting sense where they have to learn and belong to the society... The parents think they are lost so now they are encouraging the younger people to go in this area ... I think there's a more sense of urgency to learn the language lately. I think they are doing a fantastic job

Extract 4.29

I : What do you think of TAM, are they doing a great job in creating awareness among the young generation in preserving Telugu language?

S10 : ...It's a good initiative but it must be a continuous effort like recently I think they've launched Telugu classes in certain places. It's a good initiative but I don't think many people know about it. More continuous effort needs to be taken...

Extract 4.30

I : So, the last question, TAM is doing many activities right? How do you think TAM is doing in creating awareness among the young generation, in preserving Telugu language?

S8 : Yes now currently, they are doing a lot of classes to encourage people to learn Telugu language. They have a lot classes...

I : But are the activities creating awareness?

S8 : Yes awareness. That's why they offering free classes in Klang Valley to ask the younger generation to study the language. If I'm not mistaken they have degree classes also I think.

I : How is the community responding to the campaign?

S8 : Community. I think it's moderate, only about 20-30% only out of 100%. Then I know people are blaming the classes is very empty and kids are not sending the kids to the class because as I know the classes are on Saturday and Sunday and parents have other activities also like sending the kids to other classes compared to sending them to Telugu class. It's not important to them

I : So you think not many are responding well?

S8 : Not many responding well because I'm staying in Subang area and I know in Sunway there is class being conducted every Sunday but the response is very bad. I know about the Subang area ... but I'm not sure about other places.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter concludes the findings of the study, whose aim has been to investigate language shift or maintenance of Telugu Language among the Telugu Community in Klang Valley. Then suggestions for further research and recommendations are presented.

5.1 Research Questions Revisited

5.1.1 Research Question One: What is the language choice of the Telugu community in Klang Valley in domains of home, social, religious, entertainment and official?

Based on the data collected, language choice differs across the selected domains and age groups. In the home domain, Telugu is still widely used with the exception of a high percentage of younger respondents who code switch and code mix with English when speaking Telugu.

As for the social domain, it is reported that the older respondents are able to use more Telugu compared to the younger generation. The younger respondents claim to be most fluent in English followed by Telugu and then Malay, whereas older respondents claim to be most fluent in Telugu followed by Tamil and then English.

In the religious domain, it is noticeable that the majority of respondents have stated that they used Telugu when it comes to personal prayers. Tamil is also widely used among the older respondents when performing religious rituals in comparison with the younger respondents who use more English or code mix with English.

In the entertainment domain there is wide range of languages to choose from, which are Telugu, Tamil, English and Malay. Language choice in this domain is also very much dependent on the availability. For example, there are no Telugu News in Malaysia, thus respondents can only choose from the available languages, i.e. English, Malay and Tamil. As for the other aspects of entertainment i.e. watching movies and listening to songs, they are available in Telugu but are limited. Thus, although the percentage of respondents from the older age group who prefer Telugu is higher compared to younger respondents who prefer English, its use is not as significant as other domains. There is a mixture of languages used in the entertainment domain across all age groups.

In the official domain, the majority of the respondents from the older age group have shown a preference for using more Malay and Tamil compared to the younger ones who prefer to use more English and Malay to communicate with public officers, teachers, doctors and police officers.

5.1.2 Research Question Two: How do younger and older generations differ in their language choice?

Based on the data collected, although there is a noticeable difference in language choice in most of the domains between the younger and the older age group, Telugu is still widely used in the home domain across all age groups with the exception of the younger one who use Telugu mixed with English. The nature of Telugu may have changed among the younger age groups due to code switching between the languages. However it is important to note that the majority of the respondents stated that they spoke Telugu as their first language at home and they normally speak Telugu at home across all age group

5.1.3 Research Question Three: What are the main reasons for language maintenance or shift?

According to the interview conducted, the interviewees stated several reasons as factors for language shift especially among the younger generation. The reasons were categorized into 4 factors, which are: impact of education, bilingualism/multilingualism, economic power of language, migration and maintenance/revival. The interviewees have mentioned that disappearance of formal Telugu education in Malaysia, with the National Education Policy emphasising Bahasa Malaysia and the economic power of English as the International Language, has greatly affected especially the younger ones. Some also have brought forward the fact that the Telugus are a minority community living in a multi-racial country; somehow this has influenced the community to adapt to its surroundings by learning other languages in order to live harmoniously with others. Based on all the responses, the majority of the interviewees have stated that having no formal education as being the main reason for the declining standards of Telugu proficiency among the younger Telugu respondents in Klang Valley.

Despite all that, the community is aware of the language situation and impending language shift. However, as some of the interviewees have mentioned, they believe that with the current efforts taken to have Telugu classes, awareness programmes, campaigns and the internet, the younger generation may slowly pick up and revive the language back to what it used to be.

5.2 Recommendations

This documentation of this study on language shift or maintenance among the Telugu community in Klang Valley though, limited, has given an indication of the importance of the mother tongue among the Telugus, which is not very encouraging.

Thus, the Telugu Association of Malaysia (TAM) together with other Telugu associations like the TAM Youth Group, Persatuan Kebajikan dan Kebudayaan Telugu Malaysia (PKKTM) should all take proactive steps without much delay to offset this decline in the use of Telugu. It is reported that TAM has already started taking measures for language revival but, as mentioned by some of the interviewees, there are several challenges. Thus, TAM has now come up with alternative measures to overcome the challenges. Some of the challenges mentioned were that the campaigns held do not reach to everyone; particularly families who are caught up with a hectic lifestyle and don't know the relevance of Telugu to the current context.

It's not only important to implement some of the measures mentioned but Telugu should work within the limits of being a minority language as well. Besides the above mentioned challenges, based on the study, many agree with the fact that language revival has to begin from home and from parents. Parents and grandparents who belong to the older age group have to make conscious efforts to choose to speak Telugu at home. They also have to transmit the language and heritage to the younger generation. After all, the home domain is known as the last bastion for language maintenance.

Most of the interviewees even claim that parents are responsible for the declining of the language proficiency. Parents should take the responsibility to teach their children their mother tongue, make them see its relevance and encourage them in their learning process. Besides, as for the entertainment domain, more effort has to be taken to air Telugu programmes on the television and radio and families should encourage each other to choose Telugu when engaging in mass media such as watching movies and listening to songs. In terms of public education and law, Telugu language should be given an official status as a minority language and be taught in schools. This will be one of the most efficient measures in maintaining or preventing language shift.

5.3 Recommendations for Future Studies

My key recommendation for future studies is to investigate the language situation in other parts of the country or the rural areas to draw a comparison between the urban and rural Telugu communities. It will also be interesting to draw a comparison between other Telugu migrant communities from other parts of the world.

Mixed marriages are still viewed negatively by the community, one of the reasons given being that the culture, tradition and language are difficult to maintain. Another study on this community that would be interesting is language use of mother tongue among children comparing those from mixed marriages and non-mixed marriages.

5.4 Conclusions

It can be concluded that proficiency in the Telugu Language has declined greatly over the years. However, with efforts taken by the Telugu Association of Malaysia in reviving the language and the provision of internet, it is hoped the language will be revived back to how it used to be. After all, the majority of the respondents stated that being able to speak the language gives a Telugu Identity. This may be a big challenge in view of the language shift observed between of the younger and the older respondents in this study. Thus, the Telugu Association of Malaysia has to take advanced measures in their effort to revive the language and to curb further deterioration of language use in the community.

Besides, financial support is another obstacle, as language planning strategies normally require large amount financial aid. Financial support from the government as well as the community will be a great help for TAM to run language maintenance projects. With proper planning and implementation of the plans, Telugu can be revived and maintained for generations to come despite being a minority language in Malaysia.

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