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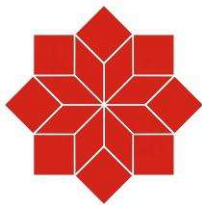
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researchers and engineers to analyze uncertain systems and make better decisions in complex environments.

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Chapter 18

Dialect Words of Vellore District

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Abstract

Language reflects the geographical setting, social life, and cultural practices of the community that uses it. Regional dialects emerge as variations of a language shaped by local environments, occupations, traditions, and interactions among people. The present study examines the dialect words used by the people of Vellore District and analyses how these words function in everyday communication. The research categorizes dialect expressions into three major groups: occupation-related, nature-related, and culture-related vocabulary. Through selected examples collected from local speech usage, the study highlights how dialect words represent the lifestyle, ecological surroundings, and cultural identity of the region. The findings reveal that dialect expressions not only serve as linguistic tools for communication but also preserve the cultural heritage and social memory of the community. By documenting and analysing these regional expressions, the study contributes to the understanding of dialectal diversity in Tamil and emphasizes the importance of preserving local linguistic traditions in contemporary society.

Keywords: Dialect words, Regional language variation, Tamil dialectology, Cultural vocabulary, Nature-related vocabulary.



1. Introduction

Language is closely related to the geographical location and living environment of the people who use it. The form and usage of a language often vary depending on the regional setting, cultural background, and social context of a particular area. As a result, the words used in everyday speech undergo changes in pronunciation, meaning, and usage from one district to another. In each region, people adapt language according to their local culture and communicative needs. These variations give rise to regional dialects and vocabulary that reflect the unique linguistic identity of a community. In this context, the present study aims to examine how such dialect words are used in the everyday speech of people living in Vellore District and to analyse the forms in which these expressions continue to function within the local linguistic tradition.

2. Dialect Words

Every language spoken by people tends to develop several regional variations over time. These variations emerge due to differences in geographical location, social interaction, and cultural practices. Such linguistic variations are commonly referred to as regional dialects. Dialects represent distinctive forms of language that are shaped by the speech habits of particular communities. Based on this understanding, the present study examines how people in Vellore District employ dialect words in their everyday communication. It attempts to identify the usage patterns and linguistic characteristics of these regional expressions within the local speech tradition.

3. Origin of the Name “Vellore District”

The name Vellore is believed to have originated from the presence of abundant Velam trees (*Prosopis juliflora* / Seemai Karuvelam) that

once surrounded the region. Hence, the land covered with these trees came to be known as Vellore. Among the 38 districts of Tamil Nadu, Vellore District occupies an important administrative and historical position. In 1989, the former North Arcot District was reorganized into two separate districts. These were named North Arcot Ambedkar District and Tiruvannamalai Sambuvarayar District. Later, in 1996, the North Arcot Ambedkar District was officially renamed as Vellore District. Subsequently, in 2019, the district underwent further administrative reorganization, resulting in the formation of three separate districts: Vellore District, Ranipet District, and Tirupattur District.

4. Taluks of Vellore District

Vellore District consists of several administrative taluks, which play an important role in local governance and administration. The major taluks of the district include:

Vellore Taluk
Gudiyatham Taluk
K. V. Kuppam Taluk
Katpadi Taluk
Pernambut Taluk
Anaicut Taluk

4.1 Words Spoken by People in the Border Areas of Vellore District

The people of Vellore District primarily use Tamil as their spoken language in everyday communication. However, since the district shares a border with the state of Andhra Pradesh, linguistic interaction has influenced the speech patterns of people living in the border regions. As a result, some residents of these areas also speak



Telugu, and elements of the Telugu language can be observed in their local speech.

4.2 Categories of Dialect Words Used in Vellore District

The dialect words spoken in Vellore District can be broadly classified into the following categories:

1. Occupation-related dialect words – terms associated with various professions and livelihood activities.
2. Nature-related dialect words – vocabulary related to natural elements such as land, weather, plants, and animals.
3. Culture-related dialect words – expressions reflecting customs, traditions, rituals, and social practices of the local community.

4.3 Occupation-Related Dialect Words

Occupation-related dialect words refer to the specialized vocabulary used by people engaged in a particular profession. Such words are commonly employed within workplaces and among workers belonging to the same occupational group. These expressions often denote tools, techniques, materials, and work procedures associated with specific professions. Furthermore, different regions and occupations develop their own unique sets of terminology based on local practices and cultural contexts. Based on this understanding, some of the occupation-related dialect words used by people in Vellore District are listed below. Examples of Dialect Words:

Dialect Word- Meaning (English)

கடுக்கா-Empty paddy grains without rice inside

கூடகட்ட- A wooden block used for sharpening a sickle

அறுப்புக்குட்ட -A goat raised specifically for meat

புடி-A unit or measure of weight

காது -A type of cooking pan (Vadachatti)

மைகோதீ- A metal comb used to remove tangles in hair

வாலுருவீ-Cattle trader

கச்சால்-A tool used for catching fish

பறி-Fishing activity or fishing method

கட்ட கறி-Fish meat

சிமிட்டா-A thorn remover or tweezer-like tool

கரண-Seed sugarcane cut into pieces for planting

கோது-Sugarcane residue or fibre

பாகு -Jaggery syrup

பப்பிள்ள-A type of fried snack (Ottavadai)

கொழலுகாரன்-A person who plays the flute

பொட்டி-Harmonium (musical instrument)

தொரப்பணம்-A digging tool used for planting trees

வாச்சி-Tool used for lifting wood

கொட்டாபுலி-Wood cutter

மனகத்த அரிசி-Red rice

1 புட்டி-Equivalent to 40 Marakkal(traditional grain measure)



கூர்-Approximate quantity without precise measurement

நவுத்தடி-Agricultural tool used with cattle plough

கொடிஜல்-Tool used for leveling soil

These dialect expressions demonstrate how local occupational practices influence vocabulary. Such words not only represent linguistic diversity but also preserve the traditional knowledge and livelihood practices of the people in the region.

4.4 Nature-Related Dialect Words

Nature-related dialect words refer to vocabulary that emerges from the interaction between human life and the natural environment. The words used by people often change according to the geographical setting, climate, and ecological conditions in which they live. As a result, regional communities develop unique expressions that describe natural objects, plants, animals, landscapes, and environmental features.

Based on this perspective, some of the nature-related dialect words used by people in Vellore District are listed below. Examples of Nature-Related Dialect Words:

Dialect Word-Meaning (English)

திரங்கல்-Pepper

சினை-Fat

குண்டலம்-Ear ornament (earring)

வாகீ-Rabbit

தூர்-Mud

கானகோழி-Water hen

கந்தம்-Lotus

சுறுக்கு-Sharpness

ஈசானம்-Northern direction

கூவான்-Rooster

தச்சாரம்-Camphor

வலயம்-Boundary

குரண்ட்-Hook

கரிசல்-Black soil

மல்லு-Fight

நாகு -Snail

உடத்தை-Squirrel

முத்த-Fermented porridge (Kali)

களிகோல்-Tool used for preparing ragi porridge

பனங்கா-Palmyra fruit (Nungu)

மோத்து-Small shoot of sugarcane

சொறுக்கு -Sugarcane

தாக்கு-Pit or hollow

குலவி கல்-Grinding stone (Ammikkal)

மச்சி வீடு -House with an upper floor (terraced house)



கரகம்-Rain

தாராதம்-Cloud

ஆலி -Oil flow or oil stream

சுள்ளி-Dry stick

கலக்கா-Groundnut

கொசவன் குட்டை-Water body or pond near the village

These dialect expressions illustrate how environmental conditions influence language use. Such words not only describe natural elements but also reflect the close relationship between the local community and their surrounding ecological landscape.

4.5 Culture-Related Dialect Words

Culture-related dialect words represent distinctive linguistic forms that reflect the geographical setting, lifestyle, traditions, and belief systems of a community. Such words are closely tied to the social structure and cultural practices of the people who use them. They often transmit cultural values, customs, and social identities across generations. Based on this perspective, several culture-related dialect expressions used by the people of Vellore District in their everyday life are presented below.

Examples of Culture-Related Dialect Words:

Dialect Word-Meaning (English)

வாராகி-Earth / land

எழிலி-Cloud

தக்கல்-A virtuous or admirable woman

வர்ணன்-King

சுரம் -Life / vital force

பக்கறை-Confusion

பீட்டா-Grandson

சுதி-Music / melody

ஒட்டான்-Enemy

கருங்காலி-Informer / traitor

நாமக்கார்-Vaishnavite devotee

பரிகாரி-Physician / traditional healer

பள்ளி-Vanniyar community

குடியானத்தெரு-Street inhabited by upper-caste groups

காசங்குடி -Migrant settlers

காயக்குடி-Indigenous inhabitants

கோல்காரன்-Village announcer who conveys public information

மருகி-Daughter-in-law

மருகன்-Son-in-law

ஜாமம்-Traditional method of time calculation

சகாயம்-Help / assistance



These expressions highlight how language functions as a cultural marker. The dialect vocabulary reflects social relationships, kinship structures, community organization, and traditional practices that shape everyday life in the region.

5. Conclusion

Language adapts to the geographical environment and socio-cultural context in which people live. Each community modifies linguistic forms according to its lifestyle, occupation, and cultural practices. In this context, the dialect words used by the people of Vellore District illustrate how regional language reflects the lived experiences of the community. This study has examined selected dialect expressions used in the district and categorized them into occupational, nature-related, and cultural vocabulary. Through these examples, it becomes evident that dialect words continue to play a vital role in preserving regional identity and cultural heritage.

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