

and (5) evaluation of status in terms of the attributes of wealth, power, privilege and authority (Malik, 1986).

Some studies have been carried out with non-linguistic backgrounds to determine the rank order or the position of caste in the social hierarchy. Beck (1972) while analyzing the peasant society of Kongu region in Tamilnadu, describes about the non-linguistic status differences that are getting explicated in the linguistic interaction between two persons. According to her, the following aspects of giving and receiving will destine the rank order of a person :

- (1) Willingness to offer/accept a seat on the verandah of a house
- (2) Willingness to give the service of disposing the plantain leaves (after meals) to the member of another caste
- (3) Giving and receiving of milk products and
- (4) Giving and receiving cooked rice on informal occasions.

Beck has pointed out that when changes in ranking occur, they occur first in informal seating arrangements and then only in the realm of informal food exchange (Beck, 1972 : 172).

Recent studies in sociolinguistics have clearly indicated that the social position of a person can be assessed well through