

## Interlingual Homophone Retrieval in Typical Malayalam-Tamil Bilinguals

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### Abstract

Interlingual homophones are words that sound similar but have different meanings in different languages. Unlike interlingual homophones, which have two orthographic representations for each language, interlingual homographs have only one orthographic representation. Bilingualism is the capacity of an individual or the members of a community to utilize two languages effectively. Items have similar pronunciations in different languages. Language may have an impact on how interlingual homophones are processed. The Malayalam and Tamil languages are members of the South Dravidian subgroup of the Dravidian language family which is used by people around the state of Kerala and Tamil Nadu who are also exposed to learning other languages. A multilingual person's use of only one language at a time reveals the separation of their various lexicons. In a lexical-decision task, an interlingual homograph activates target words in both of the bilinguals' languages. Hence arises a need to study the retrieval of the semantics of the perceived interlingual homophone in Malayalam-Tamil bilinguals. Thus, the present study aimed at investigating the interlingual homophone retrieval abilities in normal bilinguals and also investigating the language dominance and its pattern in Malayalam Tamil bilinguals. For the fulfillment of this aim, 40 graduate students further divided into 20 Malayalam natives and 20 Tamil natives with no evident health problem, or any associated illness participated in the present study. A list of 12 paired words (Malayalam and Tamil) was presented to all subjects whose task was to carefully listen to the words and to write the meaning of each word. The responses were then tabulated according to the number of correctly written words with correct meaning in each language by a score of 1 and for the wrong written word with incorrect meaning by a score of 0 and further data was analyzed.

Results indicated that the native Malayalam speakers and Tamil speakers performed well in their native languages whereas, during a cross-comparison of data, Malayalam natives responded comparatively better in Tamil word meanings than the Tamil natives' performance for Malayalam word meanings. According to the aforementioned findings, people have a reasonable command of two languages, which are

subconsciously activated in both languages, and those in the non-required language are not suppressed.

## **Introduction**

Semantics is the study of word, phrase and sentence meanings. The semantic analysis focuses on what the words actually mean, as opposed to what a speaker might desire the word to mean. The traditional meaning that a language's word and sentence communicate is what is known as linguistic semantics (Yule,2010).

The relationship between words in a language is described by homophones, homonymy and polysemy. Homophones are two distinct words that sound the same but have different meanings, spellings, or both (Rigges, 2005). Homophones are words that sound the same but mean different things. E.g., new and knew (Wilson and Mihalicek, 2011).

Interlingual homophones are two distinct words that have the same pronunciation but have different meanings in each language. Every person's experience with bilingualism is different, depending on how much and how well they are exposed to the languages they learn as well as how often they utilize them in social situations (American Speech and Hearing Association [ASHA], 2004).

Bilinguals have more difficulty comprehending mixed word sequences than sentences presented in a single language and the processing of interlingual homophones can differ between languages.

Nyugen (2013) examined the impact of interlingual homophones in Vietnamese and English. Bilinguals reveal that for each interlingual homophone, imbalanced bilinguals were predicted to have an orthographic representation in their first language alone but a phonological representation in both of their languages.

Maitreyee and Goswami (2009) analyzed inter-lingual homophone retrieval skills in Hindi-Kannada bilinguals and revealed that skills will be more pronounced in the native language when retrieving word meanings.

Even though interlingual homophones are words with similar pronunciations but different meanings across languages, they may vary in processing with different languages. However, few Indian and Western studies were attempted on the same.

Rajalekshmi, Kumaraswamy and Rao (2015) studied language dominance and its pattern among bilinguals and multilingual and their findings demonstrate that younger people are better at retrieving the meanings of inter-lingual homophones in their native languages (L1). Also, people who acquire additional languages than L1 are equally proficient in both L1 and L2.

Vinodhini and Ramya (2015) found that one can effectively perform better in their first language without the intrusion of others, showing a picture of two distinct lexicons for each language. When a person can speak two languages quite well, their lexical resources are unconsciously active in each language with the resources in the language that is not necessary being suppressed (Green,2003).

Mercier, Pivneva and Titone (2014) explained that bilinguals with strong inhibitory control can avoid cross-language activation during spoken word processing. Furthermore, Pryle and Bogush (2000–2001) contend that regular homophone practice improves readers' general reading comprehension, spelling, pronunciation, and vocabulary knowledge.

It is undeniable that the mother tongue has an impact and that interlingual transfer occurs frequently, particularly in learning contexts when students' exposure to the foreign language is limited to a few hours per week of formal classroom instruction (Mahmoud, 2000).

Malayalam is a Dravidian language used by 96.7% of people around the Indian state of Kerala and the union territory of Lakshadweep. Tamil is also a Dravidian language officially used by the people in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and the union territory of Puducherry (Pondicherry). These languages are spoken commonly among the two states of South India. When a bilingual person uses just one language at a time, their lexicons are distinct from one another. Despite the aforementioned, in a lexical-decision task, an interlingual homograph activates target words in both bilingual's languages. Therefore, research on how Malayalam-Tamil bilinguals retrieve the meanings of perceived interlingual homophones was necessary.

## **Review of Literature**

Language is a system of conventional spoken, manual (signed) or written symbols through which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture express themselves. The functions of language include communication, the expression of identity, play, imaginative expression, and emotional release.

Semantics is also called semiotics, semiology or semasiology, the philosophical and scientific study of meaning in natural and artificial languages. Linguistic semantics has been defined as the study of how languages organize and express meanings. Linguistic semantics is an attempt to explicate the knowledge of any speaker of a language that allows that speaker to communicate facts, feelings, intentions, and products of the imagination to other speakers and to understand what they communicate to him or her.

Bilingualism is the ability of an individual or the members of a community to use two languages effectively. Interlingual homophones are one of two or more words pronounced alike but different in meaning or derivation or spelling items with similar pronunciations across languages.

The Malayalam language is a member of the South Dravidian subgroup of the Dravidian language family. Malayalam is spoken primarily in India, where it is the official language of the state of Kerala and the union territory of Lakshadweep. It is also spoken by bilingual communities in contiguous parts of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. In the early 21st century, Malayalam was spoken by more than 35 million people. The Tamil language is also a member of the Dravidian language family, spoken primarily in India. It is the official language of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and the union territory of Puducherry (Pondicherry).

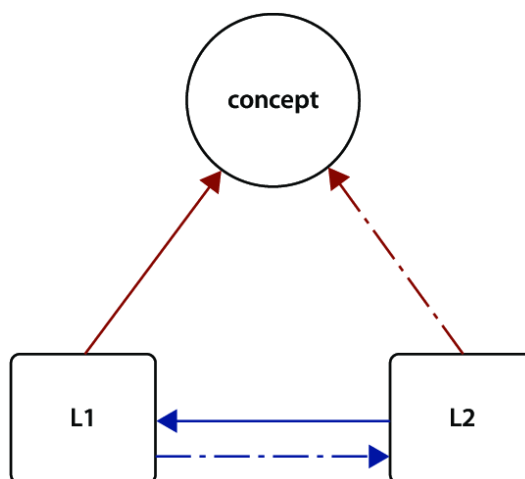
The separation of lexicons is the indicator of the usage of a single language at a time by bilinguals.

Lalor and Kirsner (2001) studied cross-language priming with "false cognates" (words with similar forms but unrelated meanings) and suggested that it was constrained by meanings rather than language. The results suggested that lexical representation in bilinguals is organized along morphological lines and is not processing interlingual homographs governed by language.

Different models explain the phenomenon of processing bilingual individuals using visual orthographs and have studied bilingual lexical representations.

A model proposed by Kroll and Stewart in 1994 is the revised hierarchical model. It captures the implications of the early reliance on L1 for the form of word-to-concept connections.

**Fig 1**  
*Showing Revised Hierarchical Model*



The Revised Hierarchical Model (RHM) is a model developed by Kroll and Stewart in 1994. Bilinguals hold the memory of two languages in their brain. It is possible to think of these storages as two separate boxes, one for each language. These two boxes describe lexical memories. In addition to that, there is a third box that holds all the conceptual memories the Bilingual knows about in both of their acquired languages. Both lexical and conceptual links exist but differ in strength. It shows that lexical links from L2

(second language) to L1 (first language/mother tongue) are stronger than those from L1 to L2, mainly because L2 to L1 is the direction you start learning while acquiring a new language.

### **Western Studies**

Pexman, Lupker & Jared (2001) examined homophone effects for isolation words using a lexical decision task and suggested that phonology plays a role in the early word recognition process. They also discovered that homophones were found to have longer decision latencies than matched control words in the lexical decision task.

Caramazza, Costa, Miozzo, & Yanchao (2001) investigated whether bilinguals' cumulative homophone frequency or specific-word frequency affected their naming latencies for homophones. An equivalent discovery was made when bilingual speakers were asked to name visually displayed Spanish words in English. Control studies ruled out the possibility that these results were the product of orthographic, articulatory, or visual identification artifacts.

Burke, Locantnore, Austin & Chea (2004) inspected homophone priming effects on young and older adults' production of proper names and concluded that homophone production strengthens phonological connections, increasing the transmission of excitation in older adults.

Chambers & Cooke (2009) evaluated the effects of sentence context and proficiency on parallel language activation during spoken language comprehension and could demonstrate that a semantically compatible sentence context eliminates the activation of the English lexicon when interpreting French sentences.

White, Abram, McWhite & Hagler (2010) examined syntactic constraints in the retrieval of homophone orthography and the results demonstrate that written homophone errors can occur during lemma retrieval or orthographic encoding, with the particular stage depending on the syntactic ambiguity of the homophone to be produced.

Ortiz, Midgley & Mestre (2012) investigated whether phonological representations from both the first (L1) and second (L2) language of bilinguals are activated during silent reading of L2 words and the results suggested that there is a parallel activation of both L1 and L2 phonological representation. These findings point to a language nonspecific model for bilinguals at the phonological level of representation.

Kisser, Wendell, Spencer, & Waldstein (2012) used a variety of cognitive tests to compare the results of native and non-native English speakers with comparable educational backgrounds and ages. The findings imply that non-native speakers of English may have a detrimental impact primarily on language-dependent activities.

Hino, Kusunose, Lupker & Jared (2013) studied the processing advantage and disadvantages of homophones in lexical decision tasks. Homophonic stimuli elicit a slower response than non-homophonic controls, according to studies utilizing the lexical judgment task using English stimuli and according to several experiments utilizing Chinese stimuli, homophonic stimuli, however, elicit a faster response than non-homophonic controls.

Middleton, Chen & Verkuilen (2015) found strong evidence in the dual nature account of homophony in frequency inheritance of homophone namings of aphasics.

Deibal & Megan (2020) evaluated individual differences in incidental learning of homophones during silent reading and their findings indicated that phonology is activated when novel words are encountered and can interfere with the acquisition of new spellings associated with the existing phonological representation regardless of homophone mate frequency.

Sousa & Rodrigues (2021) investigated the interlingual homophones in bilingual lexical access and concluded that both languages of a bilingual strongly interact at the phonological level.

### **Indian Studies**

Maitreyee & Goswami (2009) examined the inter-lingual homophone retrieval abilities in Hindi-Kannada bilinguals. The findings showed that native speakers of Hindi and Kannada were more likely than non-native speakers to recollect the meanings of words for both children and adults. Teenagers, however, did well in both languages. A bilingual person is thought to develop different lexicons for their L1 and L2 at a young age, after which there is an interaction between the two lexicons and eventually the language that is used the most takes dominance.

Edward, Venkatesh & Saddy (2012) evaluated the two later-acquired but proficient languages, English and Hindi of two multilingual individuals with transcortical aphasia with basal ganglia and brain stem lesion. They observed dissociation between lexical and syntactic profiles in both languages with uniform performance across the languages at the lexical levels and an uneven performance across the languages at the syntactic levels.

Rajalekshmi, Kumaraswamy & Rao (2015) investigated the language dominance and its pattern in Hindi-English bilingual and multilingual using interlingual homophones. The result shows that the retrieval of meanings of the interlingual homophones is superior in their native languages (L1) in younger adults.

Vinodhini & Ramya (2015) reported the language dominance and its pattern in Tamil-English bilinguals and multilingual using interlingual homophones. The result suggested that younger subjects exhibit a shared lexicon while both teenagers and adults

show selective lexical access which indicates the fact that L1 has a stronger base compared to L2 in the processing of interlingual homophones.

Felix & Kumaraswamy (2021) investigated the interlingual homophone retrieval in typical Malayalam-Hindi bilinguals and the results suggested that retrieval of interlingual homophones is superior in the native language.

### **Need for the Study**

Interlingual homophones are words that share similar pronunciations but have different meanings in different languages. The languages Malayalam and Tamil also have homophones, which have the same pronunciation but completely distinct meanings. When speaking one language, bilinguals show the division of lexicons. Thus, it is crucial to research how Malayalam-Tamil bilinguals retrieve the meanings of interlingual homophones that are perceived.

## **Ology**

### **AIM**

The study aims to investigate the inter-lingual homophone retrieval abilities in typical bilinguals and to investigate the language of dominance and its pattern in Malayalam-Tamil bilinguals using interlingual homophones.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

The participants of the study were forty graduates (twenty natives of Malayalam and twenty natives of Tamil) in the age group of 18 to 26 who were proficient in Malayalam and Tamil languages. The participants with any form of hearing, or neurological problems were excluded from the study.

### **STIMULUS PREPARATION**

A list of 12 paired words that were commonly used in Malayalam and Tamil languages with different meanings (homophones) was prepared. The prepared stimulus was validated by 10 speech-language pathologists who are working in the field for more than 5 years for judging the appropriateness of the words.

### **PROCEDURE**

- The validated list was recorded by the examiner with a high-quality condenser microphone and was displayed using a Lenovo core i3 laptop to the participants in a well-illuminated room.
- The participants' task was to write down the meaning of each word after listening and seeing the displayed words carefully.

## **ANALYSIS**

A score of 1 was provided for the correct writing with meaning and 0 for wrong writing with incorrect meaning was provided. The accumulated data was further subjected to statistical analysis and the results are discussed in the next chapter.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study aimed to investigate the inter-lingual homophone retrieval abilities in typical bilinguals and to investigate the language of dominance and its pattern in Malayalam-Tamil bilinguals using interlingual homophones.

The collected data were summarized using Descriptive Statistics: frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation (S.D). To compare the difference in proportion; Chi-square or Likelihood ratio test was used. The difference in the total score of the response to Malayalam meaning words and Tamil meaning words was analyzed by using Paired “t” test. The p-value < 0.05 was considered significant. Data were analyzed by using the SPSS software (SPSS Inc.; Chicago, IL) version 26.0.

**Table 1**

*Showing the no. of participants in the study.*

(n = 40)		Frequency	%
Natives	Malayalam	20	50
	Tamil	20	50

**Table 2**

*Showing the frequency and percentage for Malayalam meaning words*

Malayalam meaning (n = 40)		Frequency	%
Word 1	Incorrect	5	12.5
	Partially correct	1	2.5
	Correct	34	85
Word 2	Incorrect	13	32.5
	Correct	27	67.5
Word 3	Incorrect	19	47.5
	Correct	21	52.5
Word 4	Incorrect	29	72.5
	Correct	11	27.5



Word 5	Incorrect	10	25
	Partially correct	2	5
	Correct	28	70
Word 6	Incorrect	8	20
	Correct	32	80
Word 7	Incorrect	19	47.5
	Correct	21	52.5
Word 8	Incorrect	18	45
	Partially correct	1	2.5
	Correct	21	52.5
Word 9	Incorrect	17	42.5
	Partially correct	1	2.5
	Correct	22	55
Word 10	Incorrect	15	37.5
	Partially correct	2	5
	Correct	23	57.5
Word 11	Incorrect	5	12.5
	Partially correct	4	10
	Correct	31	77.5
Word 12	Incorrect	13	32.5
	Partially correct	1	2.5
	Correct	26	65

**Table 4.3**

*Showing frequency and percentage for Tamil meaning words*

Tamil meaning (n = 40)		Frequency	%
Word 1	Incorrect	6	15
	Correct	34	85
Word 2	Incorrect	11	27.5
	Correct	29	72.5
Word 3	Incorrect	18	45
	Partially correct	1	2.5
	Correct	21	52.5
Word 4	Correct	40	100
Word 5	Incorrect	3	7.5
	Correct	37	92.5
Word 6	Incorrect	17	42.5
	Partially correct	2	5
	Correct	21	52.5

Word 7	Incorrect	12	30
	Partially correct	1	2.5
	Correct	27	67.5
Word 8	Incorrect	23	57.5
	Partially correct	1	2.5
	Correct	16	40
Word 9	Incorrect	18	45
	Partially correct	1	2.5
	Correct	21	52.5
Word 10	Incorrect	14	35
	Partially correct	2	5
	Correct	24	60
Word 11	Incorrect	16	40
	Partially correct	5	12.5
	Correct	19	47.5
Word 12	Incorrect	7	17.5
	Partially correct	10	25
	Correct	23	57.5

**Table 4**

*Showing comparison of the response to Malayalam meaning words between Malayalam natives and Tamil natives*

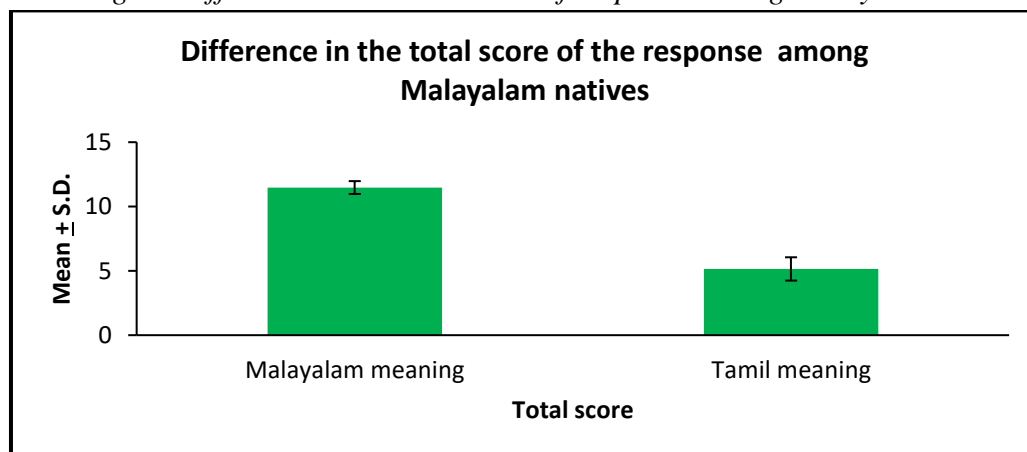
Malayalam meaning		Natives				Likelihood Ratio/Chi square#	p-value
		Malayalam		Tamil			
		n	%	n	%		
Word 1	Incorrect	0	0	5	25	9.382	0.009*
	Partially Correct	0	0	1	5		
	Correct	20	100	14	70		
Word 2	Incorrect	0	0	13	65	19.259#	< 0.001*
	Correct	20	100	7	35		
Word 3	Incorrect	0	0	19	95	36.190#	< 0.001*
	Correct	20	100	1	5		
Word 4	Incorrect	9	45	20	100	15.172#	< 0.001*
	Correct	11	55	0	0		
Word 5	Incorrect	0	0	10	50	21.949	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	0	0	2	10		
	Correct	20	100	8	40		
Word 6	Incorrect	0	0	8	40	13.112	< 0.001*
	Correct	20	100	12	60		
Word 7	Incorrect	0	0	19	95	36.190#	< 0.001*

	Correct	20	100	1	5		
Word 8	Incorrect	0	0	18	90	47.411	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	0	0	1	5		
	Correct	20	100	1	5		
Word 9	Incorrect	0	0	17	85	37.926	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	1	5	0	0		
	Correct	19	95	3	15		
Word 10	Incorrect	0	0	15	75	37.640	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	0	0	2	10		
	Correct	20	100	3	15		
Word 11	Incorrect	0	0	5	25	15.128	0.001*
	Partially correct	0	0	4	20		
	Correct	20	100	11	55		
Word 12	Incorrect	1	5	12	60	18.111	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	0	0	1	5		
	Correct	19	95	7	35		

\* Significant)

**Fig 3**

*Showing the difference in the total score of response among Malayalam natives*



The Likelihood Ratio or Chi-square test was used to compare the response to Malayalam meaning words between Malayalam natives and Tamil natives. There was a difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the response to all the Malayalam meaning words between Malayalam natives and Tamil natives.

**Table 5**

*Showing the comparison of the response to Tamil meaning words between Malayalam natives and Tamil natives*

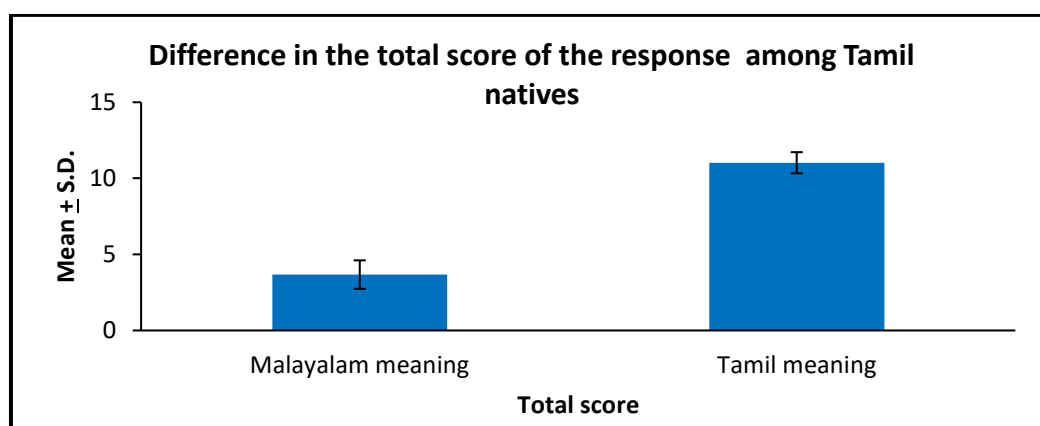
Tamil meaning		Natives				Likelihood Ratio / Chi square#	p-value
		Malayalam		Tamil			
		N	%	n	%		
Word 1	Incorrect	6	30	0	0	9.382	0.002*
	Correct	14	70	20	100		
Word 2	Incorrect	11	55	0	0	15.172#	< 0.001*
	Correct	9	45	20	100		
Word 3	Incorrect	18	90	0	0	42.243	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	0	0	1	5		
	Correct	2	10	19	95		
Word 4	Correct	20	100	20	100	--	--
Word 5	Incorrect	2	10	1	5	0.367	0.545
	Correct	18	90	19	95		
Word 6	Incorrect	15	75	2	10	19.914	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	1	5	1	5		
	Correct	4	20	17	85		
Word 7	Incorrect	11	55	1	5	14.196	0.001*
	Partially correct	0	0	1	5		
	Correct	9	45	18	90		
Word 8	Incorrect	19	95	4	20	26.717	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	0	0	1	5		
	Correct	1	5	15	75		
Word 9	Incorrect	17	85	1	5	30.503	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	0	0	1	5		
	Correct	3	15	18	90		
Word 10	Incorrect	12	60	2	10	16.976	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	2	10	0	0		
	Correct	6	30	18	90		
Word 11	Incorrect	14	70	2	10	16.49	< 0.001*
	Partially correct	1	5	4	20		

	Correct	5	25	14	70		
Word 12	Incorrect	5	25	2	10	22.991	< 0.001*
	Partially correct						
	Correct	10	50	0	0		
	Correct	5	25	18	90		

(\* Significant)

**Fig 3**

*Showing the difference in the total score of the response among Tamil natives*



The Likelihood Ratio or Chi-square test was used to compare the response to Tamil meaning words between Malayalam natives and Tamil natives. There was a difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the response to the Tamil meaning words, except the fifth word, between Malayalam natives and Tamil natives.

**Table 6**

*Showing the difference in the total score of the response to Malayalam meaning words and Tamil meaning words*

Natives	Total score	Mean	S.D.	"t"	p-value
Malayalam	Malayalam Meaning	11.48	0.50	44.615	< 0.001*
	Tamil meaning	5.15	0.90		
Tamil	Malayalam meaning	3.68	0.94	-31.998	< 0.001*
	Tamil meaning	11.03	0.70		

(\* Significant)

The Paired "t" test was used to find the difference in the total score of the response to Malayalam meaning words and Tamil meaning words for each native. There was a

difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the mean total score of Malayalam and Tamil meaning words for Malayalam natives as well as Tamil natives.

The present study revealed that the retrieval of meanings of interlingual homophones is superior in native languages. It suggests that one performed better in native (L1) without the interference of other languages (L2).

It can also be concluded that individuals have appropriate orders in two languages that are subconsciously activated in both languages, with those in the language that is not necessarily being muted or suppressed.

## DISCUSSION

Results indicated that the native speakers performed well in their native language(L1). The non-native speakers performed better for Tamil words and a significant difference was obtained. Whereas for Malayalam words, the non-natives performed a little less when compared to the performance of non-natives in Tamil words.

The cross-comparison data for Tamil and Malayalam words for native and non-native speakers yielded a difference that reveals that the retrieval of meanings of interlingual homophones is superior in the native language i.e., L1. The present finding is in accordance with Maitreyee & Goswami (2009), Rajalakshmi & Kumaraswamy (2015), Vinodhini & Ramya (2015) and Felix & Kumaraswamy (2017) who claim that native language will be more dominant for the retrieval of the meaning of words. These findings are also consistent with past research showing that bilinguals organize and retrieve words primarily in their dominant language (Curtis,1978). The Revised Hierarchical model also provides a compelling explanation for the difference between L1 and L2 in terms of L1's superior retrieval ability (Kroll and Stewart, 1994). Based on this paradigm, it can be assumed that words from L1 have greater associations with concepts than those from L2 do. This demonstrates that L1 has a stronger base than L2 for processing interlingual homophones.

The results of the current study also provided support for the idea that one can successfully perform better in one's native language (L1) without interfering with another language's (L2), presenting the idea of two distinct lexicons for both languages. They demonstrate selective lexical access (i.e., only one language is stimulated at a time), which is consistent with prior research (Gerard and Scarborough,1989). This was in contrast to the current study, which claimed that lexical elements were subconsciously activated in both languages when a person had a reasonable command of both. (Greens,1986

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Interlingual homophones are words that sound similar but have different meanings in different languages. Unlike interlingual homophones, which have two orthographic representations for each language, interlingual homographs have only one orthographic representation.

Bilingualism is the capacity of an individual or the members of a community to utilize two languages effectively. Items have similar pronunciations in different languages. Language may have an impact on how interlingual homophones are processed. Few studies in Indian languages have been attempted by Maitreyee and Goswami (2009), Rajalekshmi, Kumaraswamy and Rao (2015) and Vinodhini and Ramya (2015) that are in accordance with this. The Malayalam and Tamil languages are members of the South Dravidian subgroup of the Dravidian language family which is used by people around the state of Kerala and Tamil Nadu who are also exposed to learning other languages.

A multilingual person's use of only one language at a time reveals the separation of their various lexicons. Despite the aforementioned, in a lexical-decision task, an interlingual homograph activates target words in both of the bilinguals' languages. Hence arises a need to study the retrieval of the semantics of the perceived interlingual homophone in Malayalam-Tamil bilinguals.

Results indicated that the native Malayalam speakers and Tamil speakers performed well in their native languages whereas, during a cross-comparison of data, Malayalam natives responded comparatively better in Tamil word meanings than the Tamil natives' performance for Malayalam word meanings. According to the aforementioned findings, people have a reasonable command of two languages, which are subconsciously activated in both languages, and those in the non-required language are not suppressed.

#### **IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY**

The study has implications for the evaluation, diagnosis and program design of interventions for bilingual young adults. We can learn about the impact of homophone words on how language is perceived and processed by retrieving the semantics of the interlingual homophones that are being used. To choose the best language of intervention for bilingual aphasia clients, L1 might be taken into account as a medium of instruction during rehabilitation for adults.

#### **LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

- Limited sample size.
- Excluded Malayalam- Tamil bilingual children and older adults.
- A large sample would have yielded more reliable results.

#### **FUTURE SUGGESTIONS**

- The study could be conducted with older adults and children.
- The present study could be further extended to a larger population.

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## APPENDIX

Phonetic transcription of the stimulus material

INTERLINGUAL HOMOPHONE	PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION
Samsaaram	/samsa:ram/
Makkal	/makkal/
Rasikan	/rasikan/
Kaadhal	/ka:d <sup>h</sup> al/
Thookam	/tu:kam/
Vellam	/ve  lam/
Madhi	/mad <sup>h</sup> i/
Mundhiri	/munḍiri/
Naadu	/na:ḍ/
Patti	/patti/
Chellam	/tʃellam/
Malli	/malli/