

# **The Study of Socio-Cultural Scenario of Eastern and Western States of India by Analysing Stylistic Features of Matrimonial Ads in Assamese and Marathi Newspapers**

*Janki Atul Navle<sup>1</sup> & Normoda Doley<sup>2</sup>*

## **Abstract**

A detailed study of the stylistic features of the matrimonial advertisements found in Marathi and Assamese newspapers has been taken into account for this research paper. This paper mainly discusses the socio-cultural aspects of the eastern and the western states of India, namely- Assam and Maharashtra. The prominent focus of this study is to acknowledge the distinguished social and cultural features which can be seen through languages. Languages are the prominent source to understand the society and its people. This can be done by analysing the stylistic features of local languages used in matrimonial advertisements. Some of these are; figurative expressions, code mixing, metaphors, alliteration, acronyms, transliteration, and uses of lingua franca. Our main aim is to know more about the sociological aspects reflected through them. Information may be gathered about educational hierarchy, importance of caste, religious beliefs, financial hierarchy, societal beauty standards, conventional age barriers, personal attributes and such other issues. etc. After analysis of linguistic data, we could comprehend the unique and distinct socio-cultural backgrounds of the two states. A recognizable cultural distinction was seen through conventional food habits of the two states. Strong mention of vegetarianism in Marathi matrimonial ads and the absence of the same in Assamese ones are noted. Given this background, a critical stylistic analysis was employed, where selected matrimonial advertisements from the weekly Marathi newspapers (Loksatta, Sakal) and Assamese newspapers (Amar Asom, Dainik Janambhumi and The Assam Tribune) were explored and analysed to find out the socio-cultural aspects of the two linguistic communities mentioned. This study helped in dissecting the matrimonial advertisements on the ground of a sociolinguistic basis.

**Key Words:** *Assamese, Marathi, Stylistic Analysis, Advertisements, Society and Culture*

## **1. Introduction**

The evolution of mankind is the story of its progress in communication methods. The digital age has availed many efficient ways of advertising in today's world. Many times

people opt for electronic media over print media when it comes to advertising and connecting people. But some conventional methods have survived even in the strong wave of digital media, one of which is the newspaper. In the era of digital media, newspapers still play a significant role in mass communication. Filled with all the horrors and achievements of different kinds of people, it gives us the real reflection of the society and helps us to understand the socio-cultural scenario of diverse communities. The authenticity and reliability of newspapers are not waned by any means. Print media has some incredible advantages; for instance, it has a higher frequency of viewing than internet ads. It is flexible in targeting the audience. It has a whole page dedicated to the small boxes of ads, which contains 'buy and sell', 'lost and found', 'plots' and 'flats' and mainly eye-catching matrimonial ads with strident colours. Newspapers are packed with debates, poetry, arts, sports, obituaries, achievements, etc.

Here we are exploring the age-old method of finding the right spouse for oneself, i.e. *matrimonial ads*. These days matrimonial ads have been digitised with the growth of online platforms like *shaadi.com* and *jeevansathi.com*. There are professional matchmakers as well. Still a huge amount of ads persist in physical form through newspaper ads. It is surprising that people still choose to use this conventional method to find a suitable life partner in this era.

A lot of these newspapers are still following the archaic ways of displaying ads. In these ads the major factors of choosing a spouse appears to be the criteria as; religion, caste, income and unreal standards of beauty, rather than considering compatibility and intimacy. The researchers had two preconceptions. Firstly, matrimonial ads in the newspapers have decreased in number, and secondly, the language used in them is wholly simple, without any figurative or decorative linguistic features. On the contrary, the number of matrimonial ads is still high in papers, having a whole page dedicated to it and the language used in them is also captivating and occasionally complicated even for the native speakers. The language used in these ads contains metaphors, alliteration, code-mixing, abbreviations, transliteration, words with figurative meaning and also some pretentious sentence constructions, which are discussed further.

These ads are capable of showing a vivid picture of the current situation of the society by giving a sneak peek into the issues like casteism, financial hierarchy, sexism, conventional beauty standards, and age barriers.

In Marathi newspapers the number of ads saying 'जातीची अट नाही (jaati chi at naahi) which means caste is no bar' are increasing. However, on the other hand, there are still plenty of ads showing the candidates are expecting grooms or brides from the same caste. Many people also would mention sub-castes. Some ads are dedicated to matchmaking of higher castes in the society.

In Assamese newspapers, religion and caste play a vital role in match-making. Some seekers want the other party to be of the same religion/caste while others not. A strong preference is given to homely, fair and good-looking women. Similarly, the usual TDH (tall, dark and handsome) for men can still be seen lingering in the minds of the Indian society.

## **Research Objectives**

In order to achieve the main objectives of the research following are taken into consideration:

- Investigate and discuss the most common stylistic devices, employed in the matrimonial ads of Assamese and Marathi weekly newspapers.
- Examine how these two local languages used in the selected advertisements reflect the socio-cultural scenario of the eastern and the western states of India, namely-Assam and Maharashtra.
- Analyse the unique and distinctive socio-cultural beliefs reflected through the usage of native languages in popular newspapers of these states.
- Compare the social backgrounds of the two communities by studying the two widely used Indo-Aryan languages of the Indian subcontinent.

## **2. Background**

Advertising has extended its horizon in recent years, tackled from a broad range of disciplines, such as anthropology, linguistics, sociology, media studies and literary criticism. The language used in ads is seen in manifold forms. With the use of parabolic and verbal utterances in language we express our ideas, feelings, and emotions. Linguistics is the scientific study of language through which we examine the system of languages using morphology, phonetics, phonology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics.

Study of style, in linguistics is called as the discipline of stylistics. This is a mainly studied field in the discipline. Its aim is to explore how the words portray meaning and how the meaning depends on the socio-cultural background of the native speakers. The language explored might be literary or non-literary. Simpson (1994) says that language is vital to stylistics because the varied forms, patterns and levels that constitute linguistic structure are important in the function of the text.

In the past few decades, advances in the advertisement industry have triggered the constant change of language used in ads. In the matrimonial advertisement sector, we have noticed a wide range of linguistic devices, which are explored to understand the socio-cultural mindset of people. Matrimonial ads are categorized under the umbrella term

of *classified advertisements*. It includes brief personal information about the bride and the groom and their families. In this stylistic analysis, we noticed that the language used while mentioning the preferences of both the parties play a pivotal role. Language has worked as the mediating equipment to interpret the societies, the mindset of the people, the cultural background differentiating two communities, language preferences, socio-economic surrounding and socio-cultural scenario.

### 3. Literature Review

In the next half of the twentieth century, the sub-discipline of Linguistics, popularly known as *Stylistics* emerged with the influential work of Roman Jakobson. Earlier, the focus of stylistic analysis was mainly limited to literary texts. But gradual developments in the field of Stylistics looked at the language of texts, its interpretations and its effect on readers led to the analysis of non-literary texts as well.

As stated by Halliday (1978:89), the socio- cultural phenomena dominate the language. The structure of the society is preserved and imparted through language. He also argued that the role of the linguistic system is impossible to disentangle from the socio-cultural milieu.

As per Fairclough (1992), stylistics look at the language by analyzing its texts, their discourse and context with focus on the spatial, temporal, cultural, social and cognitive aspects. He stated, "*Language use reflects the culture and it is impossible to disassociate the two in any real sense – the way a culture sees the world is reflected in its language.*" (Fairclough 1992:207)

According to Simpson (2004:3), it could be inappropriate to analyze the stylistic features of only literary language. He mentions that the language of advertising, music, media, and also informal conversation can portray a high degree of discourse and stylistic artistry. Simpson (2004:2) proclaims that "*The creativity and innovation in language use should not be seen as an exclusive preserve of literary writing.*" Simpson believes that if the description of language is complete and perfectly contextualized then the stylistic analysis will be fuller and accurate.

### 4. Methodology

For this research, the study aimed to conduct a stylistic analysis of the language used in matrimonial advertisements of Marathi and Assamese newspapers. It is a context-bound qualitative research which explores the views, perceptions, attitudes and beliefs of these two linguistically distinct states of India. This study revolves around the fulcrum of explorative

research which helped to investigate the socio-linguistic idea of a language being the mirror of the current picture of the society.

It was noticed that many previous studies were conducted to explore the stylistic features of advertisements focused only on linguistic features. As a result, it appeared that the explorative research design would provide the most suitable framework since this study attempted to investigate not only linguistic but also socio-cultural aspects of the language used in matrimonial advertisements.

For this research, random sampling was used to collect an appropriate number of samples from the primary data sources. Convenient sampling was used to choose the advertisements from Marathi newspapers namely -*Sakal*, *Loksatta* and the three news papers published from Assam are, *Dainik Janambhumi*, *Amar Asom* in Assamese language and *The Assam Tribune* in English.

The data analysis was done by taking into account the linguistic-stylistic theory. The researchers explored matrimonial advertisements in local newspapers to study the use of linguistic features such as metaphors, alliteration, code-mixing, abbreviations, transliteration, words with figurative meaning and also some pretentious sentence constructions to understand the socio-linguistic aspects behind it. This analysis resulted in knowledgeable findings and conclusions.

## **5. Analysis of Assamese Matrimonial Ads**

Some advertisements throw some expected nuances that are exclusive to the culture. When it comes to matrimonial ads in Assamese newspapers, we can see a realistic picture of religion and caste playing a vital role in match-making. Some seekers want the other party to be of the same religion/caste while others not. It can also be seen that the description of the bride/groom is given in not more than two lines. Salary plays a major role in seeking alliance. A groom would not go for a bride who earns more than the former. Parents' professions also play a major role in match-making. An authentic display of Assamese society and culture has been attempted in this research to acquaint the readers on how Assamese people seek an alliance through matrimonial ads in print media. The data are reviewed based on the use of language and how these stylistic devices work in captivating the audience.

### **5.1 Charges for advertisement in various newspapers**

The rates charged for matrimonial ads differ from paper to paper and from region to region. It also depends on the target audience. If a seeker is targeting his/her locality, then the number of printed copies would be less compared to the ones seeking within the state or

The Study of Socio-Cultural Scenario of Eastern and Western States of India by Analysing Stylistic Features of Matrimonial Ads in Assamese and Marathi Newspapers

beyond. *Amar Asom*, an Assamese daily charges 350 rupees for 20 words, whereas, *The Assam Tribune*, an English daily charge 360 for 12 words. The matrimonial ads are displayed weekly, and they give emphasis on the bride/groom's caste, background, profession, degree, height, salary (sometimes), parents' profession and they would also add if a person is divorced.

## 5.2 Religion and Caste

*Religion* and *Caste* plays a crucial role in the area of match-making. However, some people post as "Caste no bar", but still mention their religion and caste. This is done to make the other party aware of the former's background. In this way, the latter party can decide whether they should proceed or not.

Ahom, 30 years, well educated, M.Tech from NIT, working for a top US MNC in Bangalore, liberal family, Caste no bar. Looking for prospects settled outside of Assam. Direct contact parents: 6000687392. Mat/G/P/ZC001084/1

● ব্রাহ্মীণ সম্প্রদায়, জন্ম 23-11-1985, M. Tech from NIT (Delhi) & MBA from FMS (Delhi), MNC (Delhi)-ত Software Engineer কপে কর্মবিত য়রকব বাবে য়বতীব প্রয়োজন। Annual Income 35 LPA. (Caste No Bar) — 6000542330

**GROOM WANTED**  
ASSAMESE/ GENERAL - 30/5'5" M.TECH. WORKING PVT. SERVICE AT GHY. CASTE NO BAR. EARLY MARRIAGE @ 0361-7967437 / 7099199746 .

Tall and good looking Assamese, Hindu, Kayastha Boy, 31 years, BE, MBA, working in a State PSU, belonging to well cultured family of Upper Assam settled in Guwahati, looking for a suitable Bride. May directly contact parents through 9864336345. Caste no bar. Mat/B/P/BP00212/1

39 years Assamese Boy, M.Tech, Engineer in NTPC Delhi (Caste no bar.) 8099494629. Mat/B/P/ZC001122/1

**BRIDE WANTED**  
Wanted Bride age 25-29 for Kalita boy/Engineer/32/5'8"/ only son/permanent resident of Guwahati. Parents - 9957285622

Figure 5.2.1. Samples of matrimonial classifieds from "The Assam Tribune" dated 8 Aug 2021.

In Fig 5.2.1, we can see that the parties do not have any problem with the caste; still they have mentioned their caste to let the other party know of their background. It can also be seen that the description of the bride/groom is given in not more than two lines.

### 5.3 Salary, Height and Beauty

The earning of the groom is of utmost importance when it comes to seeking an alliance. A groom would not go for a bride who earns more than the former. Also, salary is mentioned to give an idea how affluent the person is. A strong preference is given to homely, fair and good-looking women. Similarly, the usual tall and handsome men can still be relevant in Indian society. Height plays a major factor in match- making. The groom's height is given to invite brides shorter than the groom. Whereas, the bride's height is mentioned to pull grooms taller than her. Parents' occupations also play a major role. It is mentioned in order to set the bar to the limit to which they are seeking alliance. The matrimonial ads in the Assamese dailies lack figures of speech and dialectal variation.

Wanted Brahmin Bridegroom for an Assamese Brahmin Bharadwaj Gotro Girl, Age 35, **tall, fair**, BE from Guwahati. Service holder preferred. Interested family can contact at : 9436211925, 8135824210. Mat/G/NL000415/1

Hindu/Assamese/34yrs/**handsome**/B.Tech from NIT & MBA from IIM/ working good profile in Metro / earning in 7 figures/Originally from Guwahati/ Caste no bar /Phone no: 9508008145. Mat/B/P/ZC000937/1

**Slim & beautiful**/Brahmin/ Assamese/27/5'5"/B.Tech/ M.Tech Bits Pilani/ working in reputed MNC Metro/ Guwahati based family/ Direct contact : # 9435242054. Mat/G/P/ZC000975/1

**Figure 5.3.1.** Samples of matrimonial classifieds from *The Assam Tribune*, *Amar Asom* and *DainikJanambhumi*. (month of July-August 2021)

### 5.4 An analysis of the text in Assamese matrimonial ads

In this segment, an in-depth analysis of some of the matrimonial adverts is mentioned. A thorough study of the ads is done to explicate the linguistic and socio-cultural context of the Assamese community. The examples are taken from the weekend edition of *Dainik Janambhumi* and *The Assam Tribune* and are illustrative of the majority of the corpus data in terms of the linguistic and cultural outline.

5'9", PGDM from Bangalore having own firm related to Media and Entertainment at Guwahati and other Business, seeks qualified working Brahmin Girl also having interest in cultural line. Father ACS Officer (Rtd.). Only son from Upper Assam, well settled at Guwahati. Parents contact: 9678001810. Mat/B/P/UP000712/1

**Fig. 5.4.1**

Assamese Kalita, pretty Girl, 5ft 6 inch, 1991 born, studying MS 3rd year (Ophthalmology), parents Retired Professors, seeks a well educated and established Boy. Contact: +91- 6001558391. Matrimonials excused. Mat/G/RL000157/1

**Fig. 5.4.2**

Nationalized Bank Employee, Bengali age 30, Nara Gon, Dhanu Rashi. 9678824131. Mat/G/RL000194/1

**Fig. 5.4.3**

★ Divorcee (Issueless)/  
জন্ম 16-02-84/ MBBS & MD from Silchar Medical College/ Guwahati-ত Govt. Doctor **কপে কর্মৰত** **হুবকৰ বাবে হুবতীৰ প্ৰয়োজন।** (Widow & divorcee with child also acceptable.) — 9707902256

**Fig. 5.4.4**

The selected ads *fig.5.4.1 and 5.4.2* identify the caste of the bride/groom as Brahmin and Kalita. In *Fig. 5.4.3*, Ganakoota is of utmost importance in Hindu marriage match making system. It is believed that if there is conflict in gana/gan/gon, there will be quarrels and disharmony in relationships. The seeker's family has mentioned both the gon and the zodiac sign of the seeker. After denoting the caste and the astrological descriptions, the age and the height are seen. Then the educational qualifications come into play. These are mentioned in *abbreviations*:

Fig.5.4.1-PGDM (Post-graduate Diploma in Management), ACS (Assam Civil Service), Rtd. (Retired)

Fig.5.4.2-MS (Master of Science)

Fig.5.4.4-MBBS (Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery), MD (Doctor of Medicine), Govt. (Government)

We see that the parents' qualifications also play a crucial role when it comes to seeking alliance with an educated family. In *fig.5.4.1*, the father's profession is given as a retired ACS (Assam Civil Service officer) and in *fig.5.4.2* both the parents as retired professors.

*Fig. 5.4.4* shows us the case of a divorcee. The adjective 'issueless' is raised to prove the seeker's innocence. যুবকের বাবে যুবতী (jubokor babe juboti) presents the figurative speech-*alliteration*. *Alliteration* is the occurrence of the same letter or sound at the beginning of adjacent or closely connected words.

The grammatical properties display phrase structures- separated by commas. The jargons *fig.5.4.2* (Ophthalmology) are mostly nouns. And a wide range of adjectives and nouns are seen with a lesser range of verbs, adverbs and conjunctions.

## 6. Analysis of Matrimonial Advertisements in Marathi Newspapers

These ads are capable of showing the current situation of the society by giving a sneak peek into the issues like caste system, financial hierarchy, and sexism. The number of ads saying 'जातीचीअट नाही' (jaati chi at naahi) *Fig. 6. (i)*, *Fig. 6. (ii)* which means 'No caste bar' is increasing. However, on the other hand, there are still plenty of ads showing the candidates expecting grooms or brides from the same caste as them. Many people also mention sub-castes. The fascinating part of these pages is that it has some ads of matchmaking groups which are only dedicated to matchmaking of higher castes in the society.

**जातीची अट नाही**  
 प्रथम व्यवस्थापक, बौद्ध, ३९/ ५'-२", गहू  
 वर्ग, सरकारी कायम नोकरी (BMC  
 Clerk). अपेक्षा: अनुरूप, जातीची  
 अट नाही. संपर्क- 9833718373.  
 0070714720-1

Fig.6.(i)

घर पाहिजे, वय ३५ शिक्षण  
 बी.ई. टी.सी.एस. सॉफ्टवेअर  
 इंजिनियर वार्षिक उत्पन्न १५ लाख,  
 आई-वडील नाही. घराची,  
 शिक्षणाची व जातीची अट नाही.  
 घर जावाई चालेल. मो. ९१५८  
 २०५७०८, ९४२१३९९८४३

Fig.6.(ii)

Some have a headline saying 'For Brahmins and also others', and some people mentioned 'no caste bar' only for the so-called higher castes of society, this demonstrates the entrenched system of caste hierarchy. Surprisingly the significant number of ads was dedicated to quadragenarians who are remarrying. We have the rigid history of patriarchy where remarriage was opposed, but the number of widow applicants has increased progressively. Some people also mentioned that they are ready to accept the child of a divorcee. 'घरजावाईचालेल' Fig. 6. (ii) (gharjavaichalel) is also mentioned in some ads. 'Gharjavai' is the term used for a groom who lives with the family of a bride.

वर सो. विभक्त सुशिक्षित ३९,  
 ५'-८", व्यवसाय. अपेक्षा  
 उच्चशिक्षित, सुसंस्कारी, नोकरी,  
 व्यवसाय करणारी लिप्ल इत  
 चालेल. ७७७००७४०५४.

Fig. 6. (iii)

One of the most significant findings was the mention of 'Live-in relationship' in matrimonial ads Fig.6.(iii), Fig.6.1.3(i). Many people did not culturally accept this phenomenon earlier; however, it is now freely mentioned in the matrimonial ads of print media. Kundli, zodiac signs are not mentioned in these ads anymore as they were earlier. Yet, unfortunately, the expectation of unrealistic beauty standards is still pervasive in society. The words like 'गोरा' (gora/gori) fair, 'उंच' (uncha) tall, (sadpaatal) thin, 'सावली' (sawli) dusky etc., can be seen in matrimonial ads.

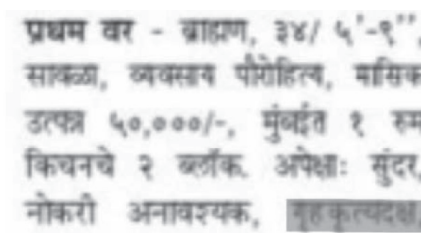


Fig.6.(iv)

A small portion of the society is working hard to make it a better place with no discrimination based on caste, race, financial condition etc. Yet, a massive number of the population is still stuck in these age-old societal norms. An analysis of matrimonial ads shows that the language used in matrimonial ads is full of various linguistic features. The choice of words has changed from earlier. Interestingly, the fusion between colloquial expressions and fancy literary terms can also be seen. 'Matrimonial advertisements' are a useful tool to get an idea of changing socio-cultural situations and even a language of the particular area.

## 6.1 Linguistic Features

### 6.1.1 Abbreviations

In some cases, English abbreviations are used in matrimonial ads published in Marathi newspapers Fig.6.1.2(i), for example:

PQM: Professionally Qualified Match

BHP: Biodata Horoscope Photograph

Engr: Engineer, B'ful: Beautiful,

fmly: Family, H.some: Handsome,

Wrkg: working, mglk: manglik

SM4: Suitable Match For

Marathi abbreviations of caste titles used in the ads:

को. ब्रा. (Konkani Brahmin) दे. ब्रा. (Deshasth Brahmin) कु. म. (Kuli Maratha)

### 6.1.2 Transliteration

The educational qualification and occupation of the candidate are written by transliterating English abbreviations into Marathi (Devanagari). एम.ए., बी.ए., एच. आर. एम. बी. ए., एम. एस. सी., गर्ह. (Government job) English to Marathi transliteration of a phrase 'well-settled' (वेलसेटल्ड) is also typed in an advertisement of 'Sakal'. Some more examples of English to Marathi transliteration are as follows: प्रोफेसर (professor), डिप्लोमा (diploma) परमनंट (permanent), जॉब (job), फारमसी (pharmacy), प्रॉब्लेम (problem), ग्राज्युएट (graduate), पी.एच. डी. (PhD), लिब-इनरिलेशनशिप (live-in relationship) etc.

१०१४७, ब्राह्मण, ३३,  
५'-५", बी.कॉम., एलएलबी,  
डीटीएल सीए इंटर व्यवसाय,  
३३ ह.म. निर्व्यसनी शाकाहारी,  
वेलसेटल्ड. अपेक्षा : ब्राह्मण.  
केळकरकाका ९८२२५०१७६०

Fig.6.1.2(i)

### 6.1.3 Code-mixing

In the newspaper 'Loksatta', while mentioning a degree of the candidate, code-mixing is used between English and Marathi Fig.6.1.3(ii). One of the Marathi ads mentioned only one English sentence which is 'retired from state government', which was written in Devnagari.

डॉक्टर वय ७३, उंची ५'-१०", प्रथमवर्ग CKP, वय २७,  
विधुर, दे.ब्राह्मण. अपेक्षा : ६'-२", Masters Biomedical  
विनापाश, एज्युकेटेड महिला, Engineering (Newyork), मुंबई  
वय ६०च्या पुढे, लिव्ह इनसाठी नोकरी, ३२,०००/-, अपेक्षा: सुंदर,  
पाहिजे. मो. ९८६०११७७७८, ९८२१३३९६०५, 0040550857-1

Fig. 6.1.3(i)

Fig. 6.1.3(ii)

### 6.1.4 Metaphor

Only one example of this linguistic feature is seen in matrimonial ads of Marathi newspapers, that is; 'हलदीचाडाग' (haldi cha daag) which literally means 'stain of turmeric' Fig. 6.1.4(i). This phrase denotes, the bride already had been engaged before and performed a cultural ceremony of 'Haldi' which takes place a day before the wedding day. In other words, this metaphor interprets that the candidate was engaged but could not get married at the last moment because of some unfortunate reasons. It can be said that an unspoken phenomenon is disguised with the use of figurative devices of the language, such as Metaphor.

मराठा वधू, १९९०, दहावी,  
दिसायला सुंदर, हळदीचा डाग.  
अपेक्षा : शिक्षण, वय, जातीची  
अट नाही. ९८२२४४११००,  
९९२१५४४२८९.

Fig. 6.1.4(i)

#### 6.1.5. Antonym and figurative meaning

‘अंधक्लर्ककरिताडोलसवधूपाहिजे’ (andhklarkkaritadolavadhupahije), Fig.6.1.5(i).

A blind clerk needs a sighted bride. This sentence was used in a Marathi newspaper called ‘Sakal’ on 11th October 2020. Here, the word ‘andh’ (blind) and ‘dolas’ (the person who has eyes) are literal antonyms, which are used in a single sentence; in addition to this, the word ‘dolas’ has one more meaning, that is ‘an insightful person’. Thus, this sentence carries a literal sense and also a figurative one.

नगरमध्ये सरकारी नोकरीत  
असणाऱ्या ५३ वर्षीय, अंधक्लर्क  
करिता डोलस, गृहकृत्यदक्ष वधू  
पाहिजे. विधवा/ अपंग चालेल.  
मो. : ९२२५३१२३४१.

Fig.6.1.5(i)

#### 6.2 Different ‘Styles’: Same Meaning

Many grooms mention that they need a bride who is a housewife, the one who is interested in being a homemaker, in conveying this particular expectation of the candidate, some advertisements use simple words and easy sentence constructions which are used in daily life. For example; ‘घरसांभालणारीपाहिजे’ (gharsambhalnaripahije), which can be translated as, ‘the bride should be able to manage the “home”’. However, on the other hand, some ads choose to use extremely complicated words in Marathi literature, which has the same meaning as earlier but is not used in spoken language by native speakers. For example; ‘गृहकृत्यदक्ष’ (gruha-kruttya-daksha) Fig.6.(iv), ‘the one who is aware of his/her duties towards home.

वर- हिंदू, वय - ७० वर्ष, मुंबानिवासी.  
अपेक्षा: हिंदू, मुस्लिम, ख्रिश्चन,  
जवळपास राहणारी. संपर्क-  
8600568168. 0070716511-1

Fig.6.2 (i)

This indicates that, the language used in these ads changes its style according to the socio-cultural and linguistic background of the people. The dialectic changes, the different choice of words shows the distinction in use of language of different backgrounds. The use of colloquial terms in the media has become common, which is also seen in the form of matrimonial ads. However, some still choose to stick with the use of literal and fancy terms which are only used in literature and not in real life conversations. Another example of this feature is, while mentioning the expected city of an applicant many ads use simple statements like मुंबईतराहणारापाहिजे (Mumbai trahnarapahije) translated as, the applicant should be staying in Mumbai. On the other hand, the same context is portrayed with different 'Style' by using an adjective 'मुंबानिवासी' (Mumbanivasi) Fig.6.2 (i), which is typically used in literary language. The word used in Marathi literature, 'गहूवर्ण' Fig.6.2(ii) and a colloquial word 'सावला', both have the same meaning, that is 'dusky complexion'. These two words are used in two different ads in the same newspaper.

३६, प्रथम वय, एम.ए., नेकरी इंडियन  
नेकरी, मुंबई, बराठा, गहूवर्णीय. अपेक्षा:  
मुंबई, ठाणे जवळील वास्तव्य,  
सुरिक्षित, नेकरी/जवळपास, निर्व्यसनी

Fig. 6. 2(ii)

## 7. Distinctive Features of Assamese and Marathi Matrimonial Ads

A fair amount of similarities can be seen in both communities ranging from the caste bars to the unrealistic beauty standards and sexism in Indian society. However, certain differences related to the usage of languages and conventional assumptions are noticed which are as follows:

The Study of Socio-Cultural Scenario of Eastern and Western States of India by Analysing Stylistic Features of Matrimonial Ads in Assamese and Marathi Newspapers

- In Marathi newspapers, half of the candidates are aged above 40 years of age. Some of them are also in the range of 60-70 years which portrays the deviation from conventional age barriers. Whereas in the Assamese newspapers, the seekers are mostly in the range of 30-40 years. And a lesser number of candidates can be seen in the age group of 20+ or 40+.
- In Marathi newspapers, a large number of ads are dedicated to quadragenarians who are remarrying, candidates with a broken engagement, person with a physical disability, suitors who are looking for companionship in old age. Contrarily, in the Assamese matrimonial ads, we see that the major number of applicants is “conventionally eligible bachelors”, with a few numbers of ads representing the issueless divorcees.
- Special columns dedicated to marriage unions of only higher caste people are noticed only in one of the Marathi newspapers having the title “Brahman ani itar” translated as Brahman and others.
- Suitors mentioning their parents’ profession and the background are spotted in the Assamese newspapers which display how affluent the family is. Whereas, in the Marathi newspapers, only the educational background of candidates is mentioned.
- The unusual mention of ‘live-in relationship’; picturing the modern progressive society was noticed in one of the Marathi newspapers which was not culturally accepted earlier in many communities.
- The language used in Assamese ads is quite straightforward and technical with a higher emphasis on abbreviations, nouns and adjectives. However, Marathi ads are highly decorated with the use of literal, non-colloquial words and catchy figurative devices such as metaphor, antonyms and fabricated sentence constructions.

## Conclusion

To achieve the aims and objectives, this study has explored the usual stylistic devices seen in the matrimonial ads of Assamese and Marathi weekly newspapers. A vivid picture of the eastern and the western states of India, namely Assam and Maharashtra has been depicted in this study by looking into the socio-cultural scenario through the uses of language in their local newspapers. Therefore, this research has highlighted the linguistic structural analysis and the role of social context to disclose functions and intrinsic meanings of the text. By examining the stylistic features of local languages used in matrimonial advertisements such as- figurative expressions, code mixing, metaphors, alliteration, acronyms, transliteration and uses of lingua franca, this study has explored the sociological aspects reflected through them. The study analysed the unique and distinctive socio-cultural beliefs and compared the social backgrounds of these two communities by studying the two widely used Indo-

Aryan languages; Assamese and Marathi. The research findings would help researchers, who are into the field of Stylistics, to investigate the figurative devices used in the media and the way they reflect the socio-cultural scenario of the community.

## References

1. "AmarAsom"Guwahati [www.gpublications.in/AmarAsom/Guwahati/24-Aug-2021/page-2](http://www.gpublications.in/AmarAsom/Guwahati/24-Aug-2021/page-2). Accessed 15 Aug. 2021.
2. Sakal, Latest Marathi News Updates, Live News in Marathi from Pune, Mumbai & Maharashtra, Marathi News Paper, ताज्यमराठीबातम्या Marathi News Latest & Breaking | Live Marathi News | Maharashtra, Mumbai & Pune | Marathi Newspaper ताज्यमराठीबातम्या | eSakal.com." *eSakal - Marathi Newspaper*, 4 Oct. 2020, [www.esakal.com](http://www.esakal.com).
3. eSakal, Latest Marathi News Updates, Live News in Marathi from Pune, Mumbai & Maharashtra, Marathi News Paper, ताज्यमराठीबातम्या Marathi News Latest & Breaking | Live Marathi News Maharashtra, Mumbai & Pune Marathi Newspaper ताज्यमराठीबातम्या eSakal.com." *eSakal - Marathi Newspaper*, 11 Oct. 2020, [www.esakal.com](http://www.esakal.com).
4. Fairclough, Norman (1992). Discourse and Text: Linguistic Intertextual Analysis within Discourse Analysis. *Discourse and Society* 3(2): 193–217.
5. Fairclough, N. (2003). *Analysing Discourse: Textual analysis for social research*. New York: Routledge.
6. Halliday, M. *Language As Social Semiotic*. Hodder Arnold, 1978.
7. Halliday, M.A.K. & Hasan, R. (1985). *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman
8. "Marathi News, Latest Marathi News, Marathi News Paper, Marathi News Paper in Mumbai." *Loksatta*, 11 Oct. 2020, <https://www.loksatta.com/>
9. Ramakrishnan, Srilakshmi. "Wheatish' Grooms and 'Innocent' Divorcées: Commodifying Attributes in the Discourse of Indian Matrimonials." *Discourse & Society*, Pennsylvania State University, 2012, pp. 432–49, doi:10.1177/0957926512441115.
10. Simpson, P. (2004). *Stylistics: A resource book for students*. London: Routledge
11. Seino Evangeline AgwaFomukong, 'Stylistics Analysis in Advertising Discourse: A Case of the Dangote Cement Advertisement in Bamenda- Cameroon.' *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, vol. 7, pp. 105-112, no. 6, 2016. *Crossref*, doi:10.7575/aiac.all.v.7n.6p.105.
12. "The DainikJanambhumi - An Assamese News Paper." *DainikJanambhumi*, 8 Aug. 2021, [dainikjanambhumi.co.in/24082021/index.php](http://dainikjanambhumi.co.in/24082021/index.php). <https://www.dainikjanambhumi.co.in/>
13. "The Assam Tribune Epaper." *The Assam Tribune*, [epaper.assamtribune.com](http://epaper.assamtribune.com). Accessed 1 Aug 2021, 8 Aug. 2021. <https://epaper.assamtribune.com/>

## Bio Profile of the Authors:

- <sup>1</sup> Linguist/Project Associate  
AI4Bharat, IIT Madras
- <sup>2</sup> PhD Research Scholar  
Centre for Linguistics  
JNU, New Delhi