

## Language barriers of the sales force in personal selling

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### Keywords

Direct selling; language barrier; personal selling; regional language; sales force; salespeople

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### Abstract

*This paper discussed the language barriers of the sales force in personal selling. For the purpose, ten types of language barriers are tested with a sample of 180 salespeople who are chosen by convenience sampling method in two southern States of India namely Andhra Pradesh and Telangana where majority people speak in the Telugu language. By snowball sampling method, conversational interviews are conducted with the sampled sales force and investigated the specific language barrier that was highly troubled them during their conversations with the customers. From the total responses, ranks are given to each barrier. Study results revealed that in AP and Telangana more salespeople experienced the barriers of literacy, jargon, dialects, unclear sound, and accent. Few troubled by word choice, pidgins, semantic gaps, slang, and linguistic ability. In urban markets, more salespeople averted by word choice and literacy, in rural areas more was hostile to semantic gaps and Jargon. The female sales force was more concerned with literacy, slang, and accent. More male sales representatives are apprehensive about dialects, unclear sound, and jargon. A similar study recommended by extending to other southern States in India such as Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Karnataka, and Maharashtra, to find out the barriers of Indian regional languages in direct selling at rural and urban markets.*

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### Introduction

Personal selling industry across the world has grown since last two decades (Harrison & Hair, 2017). Introduction of mobile phones and wearable technologies (Poon et al., 2017) transformed the communications (Feng, Guo, & Chiang, 2009; Thaler & Tucker, 2013) that resulted in transformations of consumers' behaviors (Román & Rodríguez, 2015). Meanwhile, marketers have exploited the online and virtual interface technologies (Geiger & Turley, 2006) to communicate and interact with customers (Swani, Brown, & Milne, 2014).

Therefore, armed with online and offline accessible capabilities, the present generation shoppers are engaging in purchases (El Banna, Papadopoulos, Murphy, Rod, & Rojas-Méndez, 2018) without the influences of retailers' promotion strategies (Trivedi, Gauri, & Ma, 2017) or the strategies of sales force to convince them to make a sale (Homburg, Müller, & Klarmann, 2011; Agnihotri, Gabler, Itani, Jaramillo, & Krush, 2017). However, customers would favor the products (R. Singh, Kumar, & Puri, 2017) that are often communicated them in local regional languages (MacKenzie, 2009; Dragojevic, Berglund, & Blauvelt, 2018).

In India, because of multi-lingual profiles of customers (Mackey, 1966; Chaudhary, 2008) particularly in South-India where people use various local and regional languages (Solomonson, 1922), several companies are still muted before their customers and they are in misery to deal with their products (Madan Shankar, Kannan, & Udhaya Kumar, 2017). Normally, differences in the local regional languages (Bhattacharya, 2017; Upadhyay & Hasnain, 2017) does exist among Indians living in urban and rural areas (Laitin, 1993). Because, they use languages with different slang, accents, semantics, and vocabularies (Factors, Maintenance, & Shift, 2000). Therefore, same words would convey different meanings in the conversations of Indians (Annamalai, 2008; Groff, 2017).

Though the products in India branded and labeled in English or Hindi languages, few products are also accessible in local regional languages (Gregory & Bhatia, 2002) and the reason is that the official language in India is English (Plough, 2014; Proctor, 2014) and majority people are speaking Hindi (J. K. Singh, Misra, & De Raad, 2013; Shukla, 2006). Besides, consumer markets in India are well-developed (Shree, Gupta, & Sagar, 2017) and the companies realized that the potential buyers are also in the Indian rural markets (Verma, 1980). Consequently, companies try to communicate with customers in their local regional languages across the country (D. Singh, Pattnaik, Gaur, & Ketencioglu, 2018).

About the Telugu language in India, 7.19% speak Telugu mainly in southern States (Census of India, 2011) and it is the common regional language to more than 75% of people in the two southern States of India namely Andhra Pradesh (AP) and Telangana. In this context, this paper focused on language barriers of the sales force and deliberated their difficulties in conversations with the customers during the personal selling in two southern States of India such as AP and Telangana where majority people speak in Telugu language (Trautmann, 2004; Bhaskararao & Ray, 2017).

### **Personal selling in India**

Personal selling, also referred as direct selling, is the marketing of products for person-to-person (Hammann, 2005; Weitz & Bradford, 1999) and it also referred as non-store retailing (Jones, Brown, Zoltners, & Weitz, 2005). However, direct marketing is advertising of products and seeking the customer responses directly through various formats like emails, text messaging, and telemarketing. Whereas, personal selling or direct selling is the demonstration of products to the customers by the salespeople (Granfield & Nicols, 1975).

Most often personal selling activities happen at the customer locations usually away from the fixed retail outlets (Albers, Raman, & Lee, 2015). It would benefit the customers because of some trail usages of products offered to the customers during personal selling (Shannahan, Bush, Shannahan, & Moncrief, 2017). As the oldest and more conventional method of selling activities, personal selling encourages the sales force to communicate formally with customers in local regional languages (Agnihotri, Vieira, Senra, & Gabler, 2016).

Primarily, the modern form of personal selling in India (Sharma, 2016) is started by Eureka Forbes in 1982. Well along in years to come other global players are also arrived such as Amway, Tupperware, Avon, and Oriflame etc. Indeed, after liberalized the Indian economy in 1991, several multinational companies are adapted the direct selling methods. Since then personal selling industry has a significant growth in India and it emerged as one of the successful industries in the country.

It is estimated that personal selling industry in India will reach INR 645 billion by 2025 with a tremendous growth (Euromonitor, 2012) that will record in the consumer markets along with FMCG sector of India (KPMG, 2017). Region-wise market size of personal selling has a major share in north region of India (29% share, 12% growth) followed by south region (25% share, 13% growth), east region (18% share, 10% growth), west region (16% share, 11% growth), and north-east region (12% share, 14% growth). The following sub-section briefed the size of the sales force in India.

### **Salesforce in India**

Being the labor-intensive industry, personal selling needs both unskilled and under-skilled workforce (Reid, Plank, Peterson, & Rich, 2017). It provides income to the sales force from sales commissions apart from wages and salaries (Kräkel & Schöttner, 2016). However, sales commissions are earned based on sales took place because of an individual sales person's efforts (Basu, Srinivasan, & Staelin, 1985) or it would earn by cumulative sales done by the group of sellers (Caldieraro & Coughlan, 2009; Madhani, 2013).

According to industry reports, more than five million people in India are engaged in personal selling and the majority of them are female (58%). In total, 0.35 million people are working in the States of AP and Telangana and 0.16 million of them are female. Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) is engaged only female (Larsen, 1993) for marketing of their beauty products in India and it is also started small entrepreneurial groups like 'Shakthi Ammas' as small-scale industries in South India to empower the village women by marketed their produced goods (hul.co.in, 2018).

However, Government is implementing guidelines for direct selling activities in India and the laws are enacted to control the pushing of sales through increasing pressure on sales force and harassments of companies on sales personnel to achieve the frightening sales targets (The Tribune, 2012). This initiative is also protecting the sales force from the unauthorized products (Quach & Thaichon, 2018) or Ponzi schemes of direct sellers (Becton, Gilstrap, & Forsyth, 2017; Gabler & Hill, 2015). In addition, these guidelines also envisage the minimum pay protection and the rights of the sales force for career advancements in the personal selling industry.

In order, marketers have trained their sales force (Smith, Andras, & Rosenbloom, 2012) on salesmanship (Homburg et al., 2011) and soft skills (Hansen, Lund, & DeCarlo, 2016) to inflate the sales in the country. For example, Amway conducted more than 20,000 training sessions in 2016 and trained nearly 0.5 million people; Oriflame organized 3,000 training sessions in 2015 and each session has nearly 100 persons. These trainings are helpful to the sales force (Krishnamoorthy, Misra, & Prasad, 2005) to gain an in-depth knowledge of companies' products (Mariadoss, Milewicz, Lee, & Sahaym, 2014) and to improve their interpersonal skills (Sunardi, Widayarni, & Tjakraatmadja, 2012) as well as develop the leadership and team building skills to generate the sales (Albers, Krafft, & Mantrala, 2010).

However, several segments of training for the sales personnel also providing unique communication skills to the sales force for dealing with the customers of business markets (Siguaw, Kimes, & Gassenheimer, 2003). As a result, the sales force would imbibe the effective communication skills to influence the buying decision process of customers in either consumer markets or business markets. Particularly, the development of language skills of sales force during the training programs is crucial in this process. In fact, many barriers would still influence the conversations of the sales force while communicating with customers. The following section briefed on causes of language barriers that would generally trouble the sales force in personal selling.

### **Language barriers in personal selling**

People express their feelings, ideas, thoughts, and knowledge through language (Anderson, 2012). In personal selling, language is central and it would portray the linguistic profiles of buyers and sellers (DeVincentis & Rackham, 2015). Typically, few features of language would impede the conversations of the people (Fishman, 1989) such as *semantic gaps, word choice, pidgins, slang, accents, unclear sound, linguistic ability, literacy, jargon, and dialects* (Businessstopia.net, 2018). Indeed, these features handled inappropriately would become barriers to effective conversations between the people (Salzmann, 2003). Yet, their meanings are as follows:

Semantic gaps are differences in the descriptions of objects. Word choice is some sarcasm or negative meanings of used words. Pidgin is an artificial language generated by the speakers of different languages. Slang is an informal language of people to create an atmosphere of intimacy in conversations. The accent is the pronunciation of words differently and oral expressions of people in distinctive manners. The unclear sound is the small or a soft voice not clearly audible. Linguistic ability is the capability of people to use the language that is understandable to each other. Literacy is knowledge of a language that would help to read and write in that language. Jargon is a technical word used by a group of people living in the same locations. Dialects are the altered versions of the vocabulary of people living in same locations or part of a country.

Apparently, in the northern States of India, the majority of people speak in Hindi and salesforce are somehow comfortable to interact with their customers (LaDousa, 2010). On the other side, in the southern States of India salespeople would experience the language barriers (Sravanthi, Prathyusha, & Mamidi, 2015; Murphy, 2012) for the reason that the people in these States use different local regional languages that are dissimilar (Eira, 2008). Therefore, direct sellers in south India have employed the sales force familiar to south Indian languages (Sandhu, 2015) such as Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, and Kannada (Sreekumar, 2009). Naturally, people use these languages with variations in slang, accents, and vocabularies (Madalli & Patel, 2009).

### **Problem statement**

This study is keen to know the worries of the sales force in the two southern States of India namely AP and Telangana where people use Telugu as core language with some differences in their language.

Initially, the language of Sanskrit and Prakrit and its grammar has an influence on vocabulary and phonetics in the Telugu language. Subsequently, the Telugu language is considerably extended by borrowed the additional sets of jargons from English and Perso-Arabic languages. Afterward, few other languages are also emerged in the usage of Telugu by a minority in both the States of AP and Telangana (mapsofindia.com, 2013).

In AP, 80% speaks Telugu, 10% speaks Hindi, and 10% speaks other languages such as English, Urdu, Tamil, Kannada, Marathi, Oriya, and Banjara. In Telangana, 77% speaks Telugu, 12% speaks Urdu, and 13% speaks other languages maybe Hindi, English, Kannada, Marathi, Lambadi, and Gond. Generally, people in Telangana mix Telugu and Urdu as such the Nizams of Hyderabad ruled this region and they had Urdu as their official language until 1948.

Moreover, people of both States have contemporary influences from the languages of their neighboring States that use Bengali, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Oriya, and Tamil. Arbitrarily, this sort of multi-linguistic credentials of people in both the States would impede the conversations (Glaz, 2001) that would imply to the one-to-one conversations between the sales force and customers in personal selling.

In this context, this study felt that identifying the specific features of language that would become barriers to salespeople in both AP and the Telangana States in India would make some logic to understand the problems of salespeople in India who use the local regional languages in personal selling.

### Methodology

The aim of this study is to discuss the language barriers that would highly trouble the sales force in personal selling. By using the convenience-sampling method, 180 salespeople in the States of AP and Telangana in India are chosen as the sample of this study. The details of the sample are provided in the sub-section 3.1.

By the snowball-sampling method, conversational interviews are conducted with the sampled sales force (Currivan, 2011) who speak with customers only in the Telugu language. Through these interviews, I allowed clarifying the questions of sampled sales force regarding the language barriers by providing the unscripted meanings of each barrier if they are not understood the question. This helped me to record the personal experiences of the participants about the language barriers during their interactions with customers (Lavrakas & Battaglia, 2008). Mainly, the ten features of the language are openly explained to the salespeople such as semantic gaps, word choice, pidgins, slang, accent, unclear sound, linguistic ability, literacy, jargon, and dialects. Then it is requested the participants to point out a specific feature that was highly troubled them during their interactions with the customers.

Finally, by standard competition ranking method (spoj.com, 2018), ranks are allotted to each feature of language based on the number of participants highly troubled in that feature. The overall study results are appended to this paper.

### Sample

The participants of this study are both male and female sales force in urban and rural markets of the two selected States in India. Details of the sample are showed below.

State	total	%	male	%	female	%	urban	%	rural	%
AP	94	52.0	54	54.0	40	50.0	50	57.5	44	47.0
Telangana	86	48.0	46	46.0	40	50.0	37	42.5	49	53.0
Total	180	100.0	100	100.0	80	100.0	87	100.0	93	100.0

### Findings

Table 1 exhibited the ranks of language barriers which are extracted from the overall study results appended to this paper. Firstly, by observing the inclusive study results as shown in the appendix; it came to know that the sales force in both AP and the Telangana States really perceived the barriers in the Telugu language. However, the study findings are as follows. Overall in both States of India, more salespeople troubled by the barriers of literacy (overall rank 1) followed by barriers of jargon & dialects (rank 2), although few are also hindered by barriers of word choice (overall rank 10). In AP, more sales personnel troubled by dialects (rank 1) followed by unclear sound (rank 2) and other barriers. However,

few of them stumbled by slang (rank 10). In Telangana, more salespeople faced the hurdles because of the barriers of literacy (rank 1) followed by slang (rank 2) and other barriers, while few troubled by-word choice (rank 10).

Table 1: Ranks of language barriers

Sample	Semantic gaps	Word choice	Pidgins	Slang	Accent	Unclear sound	Linguistic ability	Literacy	Jargon	Dialects
Overall	8	10	9	7	5	4	6	1	2	2
AP	7	8	8	10	6	2	5	4	3	1
Telangana	7	10	7	2	3	7	6	1	3	5
Male total	7	8	8	10	6	2	5	4	3	1
AP	6	8	9	9	5	2	3	6	1	3
Telangana	6	8	10	2	2	6	8	1	2	5
Female total	7	10	7	2	3	7	6	1	3	5
AP	8	8	6	10	6	3	4	2	4	1
Telangana	8	8	3	2	3	8	3	1	3	7
Urban total	3	1	3	3	9	7	3	2	7	10
AP	2	2	5	7	7	2	5	1	7	10
Telangana	6	1	3	2	6	10	3	6	3	6
Rural total	1	9	7	6	7	5	4	3	1	10
AP	1	8	6	8	4	6	2	2	4	10
Telangana	2	8	8	2	10	2	6	2	1	7

Note: Ranks extracted from the study results appended to this paper.

Among the salesmen in both the States, more are faced the hurdles in dialects (rank 1) followed by unclear sound (rank 2) and other barriers. On the other hand, few deteriorated by slang (rank 10). In AP, more salesmen are foiled by jargon (rank 1) followed by unclear sound (rank 2) and other barriers. Yet, few faced the problems with pidgins and slang (both ranked 9). In Telangana, more salesmen are obstructed in their conversations because of low literacy (rank 1) followed by jargon (rank 2) and other barriers. However, few suffered from pidgins (rank 10). Among the total female sales force, more hindered by low literacy (rank 1) followed by slang (rank 2) and other barriers. Likewise, fewer saleswomen are agonized by word choice (rank 10).

However, in AP, more saleswomen jammed by dialects (rank 1) followed by literacy (rank 2) and other barriers. Similarly, few of them suffered because of slang (rank 10). As well, the more female selling workforce in Telangana is troubled by low literacy (rank 1) followed by slang (rank 2) and other barriers. Few of them in Telangana is mainly hampered by semantic gaps, word choice, and unclear sound (least ranked, rank 8).

Among sampled sales force in urban markets, more are suffered by word choice (rank 1) followed by literacy (rank 2) and other barriers. Alike, few of them are troubled by dialects (rank 10).

In urban markets of AP, more sales force affected by low literacy (rank 1) followed by unclear sound (rank 2) and other barriers. Correspondingly, fewer salespeople have highly experienced the problems of dialects (rank 10). In Telangana, the sales force in urban markets is impeded by word choice (rank 1) followed by slang (rank 2) and other barriers. However, few salespeople are witnessed by problems of unclear sound (rank 10).

Among the sales staff at rural markets in both the States, more are fenced mainly by the jargon & dialects (both ranked 1) followed by literacy (rank 3) and other barriers. In the same way, few of them also expressed that they are mainly restricted by dialects (rank 10) in rural markets.

However, in AP, more salespeople in rural markets are highly perceived the semantic gaps (rank 1) followed by barriers of linguistic ability & literacy (both ranked 2), and jargon (rank 4). Besides, the small number of salespeople told that they struggled with the barrier of dialects (rank 10) in rural markets.

In the rural markets of Telangana, more salespeople obstructed by jargon (rank 1) followed by semantic gaps, slang, unclear sound, and literacy (all are ranked 2). Whereas few of them has faced the difficulties in speaking with the rural customers in Telangana because of dialects (rank 7), word choice & pidgins (ranked 8), and accent (rank 10).

Altogether, the majority of salespeople in both AP and the Telangana States seems highly pragmatic to the barriers of literacy, jargon, dialects, unclear sound, and accent. However, few are deterrent because

of word choice, pidgins, semantic gaps, slang, and linguistic ability. In urban markets, more sales force averted by low literacy & word choice. Whereas in rural markets the condition of salespeople depicted that, they are hostile to jargon & semantic gaps. Explicitly, the more female sales force is intimidated by literacy, jargon, and dialects. However, more salesmen are apprehensive about dialects, unclear sound, and jargon.

### Discussion

Salespersons use good language that is to be more intelligible to the customers for making a sale. However, the intelligibility of Telugu language would be better in the clear speeches than in the conversational speeches (Durisala, Prakash, Nambi, & Batra, 2011). A clear speech is the slow-speaking, pausing, and enunciating during the spell of sentences. A conversational speech is the exchange of feelings and thoughts during the speech. Therefore, as the big benefit-talkers in personal selling, salespeople would usually change their acoustic characteristics and they would try to shift from conversational speeches to clear speeches (Ferguson & Kewley-Port, 2007).

However, among the native Telugu speakers with normal hearing, the speech recognition levels are usually not uniform because of the barriers such as noise, male voice, competing speech, and some other related issues of language barriers (Hygge, Rønnberg, Larsby, & Arlinger, 1992; Tanniru et al., 2017). Normally, the interference of these kinds of barriers in the conversations would often refer to informational masking (Schneider, Li, & Daneman, 2007).

In this background, this study focused on language barriers that would reduce the clarity in the conversations of the salespeople in personal selling. It is found that the sample of 180 salespeople in AP and Telangana States of India who is using the Telugu language to make a sale has the language barriers of literacy, jargon, dialects, unclear sound, accent, linguistic ability, slang, semantic gaps, pidgins, and word choice. The rationale behind these barriers is as follows.

Majority people in both AP and Telangana speak in Telugu language but with little differences in the vocabulary and grammar (Prabhakar Babu, 1977). Actually, Telangana is part of AP before its bifurcation on 2 June 2014 (indiacode.nic.in, 2014). However, by ancestry, people of both States have the influence of '*mandalika bhashalu*' means local regional languages or languages of majority people in the particular areas (Usha Ponnala, 1998). Henceforth, the blend of all such *mandalikas* is the core Telugu language that the people speak in both the States (Campbell & Anantam, 1905). Outwardly, key differences are existed within and between the *mandalikas* of rural and urban areas of both the States. Accordingly, in the conversations of people in both States, same words would convey different meanings and the people would use different words with altered slangs and accents to describe the same objects. As a result, the barriers such as semantic gaps, word choice, pidgins, and dialects would inhibit their conversations.

For instance, of the 13 districts in AP and 31 districts in Telangana, people have many differences in their language because they speak Telugu with completely different word choices, jargons, and dialects. To exemplify, in AP, people would convey the meaning of English word 'more' usually by says 'marinta' and in Telangana people generally says it as 'masthu'.

Further, within the State of AP, people of different districts use different words to convey the meaning of 'more' as they say 'ekkuva', 'marinni', 'inka', 'hechu', 'jasthi', 'mikkili'. Likewise, within the State of Telangana, in different districts, people say 'ginni', 'chala', 'chana', 'boledu' to convey the same meaning. However, they would pronounce these words in distinct slangs popularly known as Telangana, Rayalaseema, Uttar Andhra, Nellore, Krishna, and the Godavari.

However, these well-known slangs also change between districts that would supplement with some unclear sound in speeches. Let us say, the people of Srikakulam district in AP had different tone accent while comparing to others. They pronounce the English question word 'what' as 'emi' with low-pitched voice, but in Krishna district, people spell it as 'endhi' with an utter male voice. In East and West Godavari districts, they voiced it as 'entanday' with a lot of polite slang that portrays much humor and funniness.

Further, people in Telangana use few Urdu words in their Telugu conversations. In the Adilabad district, people would mix Marathi words because three-fourths of its land neighbored to the State of Maharashtra. Likewise, people in the rural areas of Mahbubnagar, Medak, and Nizamabad districts

would merge Kannada words with Telugu, as they are adjacent to the State of Karnataka. This would lead to confront the language barriers of literacy, and linguistic ability during the conversations.

Similarly, the people of Srikakulam and Vizianagaram districts in AP have the boundary of Odisha state. Obviously, few people in these two districts would mix some words of Oriya language in their conversations. As well, people of Chittoor district would use Tamil words adapted from their boundary of Tamil Nadu State, and the people of Anantapur district would habituate to mix the Kannada words in their conversations because of neighbor State of Karnataka.

It would imply that this discussion has the rationale behind the barriers in the Telugu language that are troubled the salespeople in personal selling. However, Gopalakrishna, Garrett, Mantrala, and Sridhar (2016) reveal the positive relationship between the dynamic behavior of sales force and sales potential in different districts. To overcome the language barriers, I would advise the salespeople to make many efforts to adapt the typical local regional languages of various districts in AP and Telangana States that not only develop their conversational abilities but also reduce the chances of confronting the language barriers in personal selling.

However, Cross, Brashear, Rigdon, and Bellenger (2007) recognize that there is a positive effect of sales force training programs on their overall performances as well as on the relationship competencies and customer orientation. Therefore, we suggest that the direct selling companies in India have to provide training to their sales teams to develop the communication skills in various indigenous languages that people use in the States like AP and Telangana that has the influence of regional languages.

### **5.1 Conclusion**

Being a popular promotional method in marketing campaigns, personal selling encompasses the specialized skills and abilities of the sales force to communicate with customers and convince them to make a sale complete and successful. Therefore, the language of sales force would play a significant role to motivate the customers for buying a product. However, it is felt that the large network of the sales force in the southern States of India has some challenges in personal selling due to the multi-lingual profiles of customers. Hence, a sample of 180 salespeople is interviewed to delineate the language barriers in AP and Telangana States of India.

Findings reveal that more sales personnel are experienced the language barriers of literacy, jargon, dialects, unclear sound, and accent. Few salespeople are troubled by the barriers of word choice, pidgins, semantic gaps, slang, and linguistic ability.

To conclude, both male and female sales force in urban and rural markets of two southern States of India have witnessed the barriers in the Telugu language, and these resulted experiences of the sales force are different in the two States by gender and market locations.

### **Limitations**

This study used non-probability sampling method for sample selection. Therefore, it is not generalized the language barriers of the sales force in personal selling. It involved only the salespeople who made the conversations with their customers in the Telugu language, but it did not involve the sales force who uses other regional languages such as Urdu, Hindi, English, Tamil, Banjara, Lambadi, and Gondi. As did this, we have reduced the bias to clearly understand the barriers in the Telugu language by interviewed the salespeople in both rural and urban areas of AP and Telangana States in India.

### **6.1 Further research**

Various barriers of language would trouble the conversations of the sales force. However, this study focused on oral conversations of salespeople in the Telugu language. Still, there is a scope to conduct further research on verbal and non-verbal barriers to the sales force in personal selling.

Similarly, a follow-on study could extend to other southern States in India such as Tamil Nadu, Odisha, Karnataka, and Maharashtra, to find out the other barriers of Indian regional languages with reference to direct selling activities at rural and urban markets. In fact, this study did not involve the customers in both the States. Hence, parallel studies on the perspectives of customers on language barriers in personal selling would enhance the scope of further research on this subject.

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## Appendix: Study results.

Sample	Language barriers and number of respondents.									
	Semantic gaps	Word choice	Pidgins	Slang	Accent	Unclear sound	Linguistic ability	Literacy	Jargon	Dialects
Overall	13(8)	10(10)	11 (9)	16 (7)	19 (5)	20 (4)	18 (6)	27 (1)	23 (2)	23 (2)
AP	7 (7)	5 (8)	5 (8)	3 (10)	9 (6)	14 (2)	11 (5)	12 (4)	13 (3)	15 (1)
Telangana	6 (7)	5 (10)	6 (7)	13 (2)	10 (3)	6 (7)	7 (6)	15 (1)	10 (3)	8 (5)
Male total	7 (7)	5 (8)	5 (8)	3 (10)	9 (6)	14 (2)	11 (5)	12 (4)	13 (3)	15 (1)
AP	5 (6)	3 (8)	2 (9)	2 (9)	6(5)	8 (2)	7 (3)	5 (6)	9 (1)	7 (3)
Telangana	4 (6)	3 (8)	2 (10)	6 (2)	6 (2)	4 (6)	3 (8)	7 (1)	6 (2)	5 (5)
Female total	6 (7)	5 (10)	6 (7)	13 (2)	10 (3)	6 (7)	7 (6)	15 (1)	10 (3)	8 (5)
AP	2 (8)	2 (8)	3 (6)	1 (10)	3 (6)	6 (3)	4 (4)	7 (2)	4 (4)	8 (1)
Telangana	2 (8)	2 (8)	4 (3)	7 (2)	4 (3)	2 (8)	4 (3)	8 (1)	4 (3)	3 (7)
Urban total	9 (3)	12 (1)	9 (3)	9 (3)	7 (9)	8 (7)	9 (3)	11 (2)	8 (7)	5 (10)
AP	3 (6)	6 (1)	4 (3)	5 (2)	3 (6)	2 (10)	4 (3)	3 (6)	4 (3)	3 (6)
Telangana	6 (2)	6 (2)	5 (5)	4 (7)	4 (7)	6 (2)	5 (5)	8 (1)	4 (7)	2 (10)
Rural total	13 (1)	6 (9)	7 (7)	9 (6)	7 (7)	10 (5)	11 (4)	12 (3)	13 (1)	5 (10)
AP	6 (2)	3 (8)	3 (8)	6 (2)	2 (10)	6 (2)	5 (6)	6 (2)	8 (1)	4 (7)
Telangana	7 (1)	3 (8)	4 (6)	3 (8)	5 (4)	4 (6)	6 (2)	6 (2)	5 (4)	1 (10)

Note: 1. Figures in brackets indicate ranks of language barriers in each row.

2. Ranks allotted in ascending order by the number of respondents highly perceived the barrier.