Chapter -2
CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1 Introduction

Sociolinguistics is a wide area of the study of functions and variations in language. Research in sociolinguistics has always been with reference to the language problems of the society. The research in sociolinguistics is conducted on the basis of relevant data, which are collected through the field survey. Then the data are analyzed to produce a comprehensive report, which displays the actual findings of research.

As (Abbi, 2001) admits that a lady investigator gets easily accepted among the respondents. Being the female investigator, I found my respondents very cooperative in sharing the information regarding the language use and preference etc., and problems related to bilingualism or multilingualism. The present study covers the sociolinguistic investigation of the use, preference and attitude of minority speakers in language contact situation of Jharkhand.

To probe the language use, language preference and language attitude among the minority speakers, an effort has been made to collect data have been collected in all the districts of Jharkhand. But most of the data from Jamshedpur, the district headquarter of East Singbhum as it happens to be the investigator's native place.

2.2 Goals and Objectives

The objectives of the present research work are formulated on the basis of close observation of the newly formed state of tribes, i.e., Jharkhand. The minority languages in Jharkhand have been neglected and are not being used in various domains. Even the
scheduled languages which enjoy the status of minority language are not being properly utilized in various domains. In a multilingual country like India such a situation is not unique only to Jharkhand. It is interesting to note that Jharkhand does not have a single majority group as in the case of West Bengal or Tamil Nadu or Karnataka where Bangla, Tamil and Kannada are the majority languages respectively. This unique situation in Jharkhand is not due to the cultural and linguistic plurality but because of the fact that Jharkhand has a higher percentage of bilingualism or multilingualism in the state. The language attitude of a speech community also plays an important role in maintaining the language. To focus on these issues, therefore, the following objectives were formulated:

1. To find out the use of minority languages in formal as well as in informal domains.
2. To investigate the preferences of minority languages in various domains and situations.
3. To find out the attitudes of minority speakers towards their M.T. as well as other languages (Hindi and English).

2.3 Formation of Hypothesis

Keeping in view these objectives, the following hypotheses were formulated for further investigation and testing.

1. The male and female respondents differ in the frequency of the use of M.T.
2. The individuals belonging to various categories of age, education or occupation differ in the frequency of the use of M.T. The Language of state or district and the link language of the state varies.
3. Individuals belonging to various social categories differ in their attitudes towards the use of their mother tongue, language of states/ districts and the other minority languages in family, education, literature and other formal settings.

4. The language of state (Hindi) is preferred to M.T. by the minority speakers as a medium of instruction.

5. The development of minority languages for literacy and scientific writings or for its use in education is not considered desirable by them.

6. The speakers of minority languages do not use their mother tongue even in family domain which causes series danger to their first languages.

7. They do not prefer their first languages in the field of education to Hindi and English.

8. The minority language speakers consider their language inferior and undeveloped.

2.4 Tools for Data Collection

The data for the present study has been collected through the questionnaire. Which consist of four sections. Section-I included thirteen questions regarding the background information of the informant. Section-II was based on language use indifferent domains. It consisted of nineteen questions. Section-III deals with language preference in eighteen different social domains. And finally section-IV is based on language attitude. It has been prepared to note the attitude of the informant towards their M.T. Hindi and English in which they are bilingual or multilingual with. It takes into account four attributes and two domains.
2.5 Sample Design

To investigate the frequency of language use, language preference and language attitude of the minority speakers we have categorized the sample into age, education, sex and occupation. The age group was further divided into three sub-groups – 1, 2 and 3. The respondents included in age group-1 were between 15-35 years. The respondents taken for age group-2 were between 36-50 years and group-3 included respondents of 51 years and above.

The social variable of education was taken in three categories as, 1-illiterate, 2-undergraduate and 3- graduate as well as postgraduate. In terms of occupation the respondents were in three classes as, 1- student, 2- teacher and 3- others which includes (business, labourer, office goers, housewives, contractors, retired persons etc.)

2.6 Collection of Data

The entire data was collected by the investigator herself. As the investigator was a native speaker of one of the minority languages of the state of Jharkhand and a member of the community, she was warmly received by the respondents and found no problems in obtaining the data from them.

All the four sections of the questionnaire were prepared in English. Respondents knowing English filled up questionnaire by themselves in the presence of the investigator. During the process, a substantial number of respondents raised questions regarding some attributes in section IV of the questionnaire based on attitudes. In turn, the attributes were explained by the investigator in order to get accurate and scientific information. To avoid any influence of personal, opinion the investigator explained the quarries of respondents with utmost care.
The investigator filled up the questionnaire of all those respondents who did not have full understanding of English. The questionnaire was simply translated into Hindi/Urdu by the investigator and no explanation was given until asked by the respondents.

A total of 250 copies of questionnaire were distributed in the state Jharkhand covering various districts. A total number of 125 female respondents have been selected while, 125 male respondents have been taken. Though we have not taken region as one of the social variables yet the data of a particular region has some regional influence on the preference of the speakers.

2.7 Analysis of Data

The data have been analyzed by obtaining simple frequency percentage for each language in each domain/situation. On the basis of the frequency of percentage we have studied the following:

1. The use of Minority languages, Hindi and English in all specific situations in respect of four social variables: age, sex, education and occupation.

2. The preference of each language for different purposes with respect to four social variables.

3. A comparison among three categories of the four social variables have been made for only written (ow), only spoken (os) and written as well as spoken (ws) purposes.

4. Attitude towards each language, according to four social variables.
The analysis of the data for attitudes was made by considering three-point scale into numerical values by assigning 1 to maximum point and 3 to minimum point.

2.8 **Presentation of Findings**

The findings of the present sociolinguistic investigation have been presented in three chapters. In Chapter III, we have discussed the use of M.T., Hindi and English by the minority speakers in nineteen different contexts. Chapter IV discusses the preference given by minority speakers of four social variables to a particular language in specific situation for specific purposes. The Chapter V deals with the attitude of minority speakers towards their M.T., Hindi and English.