CHAPTER-II

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
2.0. Ethnolinguistic Approach to Research

The aspect of ethno linguistic theory is an approach that may be traced back to the work of early twentieth century ethnographer, Bronislaw Malinowski, which has subsequently been taken up by a number of contemporary scholars, including (most notably) Dell Hymes. For Malinowski, “the major goal of ethnography was to grasp the native’s point of view, his relations to life, to realize his vision of his world” (Malinowski 1922, quoted in Duranti 1997:215). A general principle in his approach to the study of language specifically is that language must be examined along with the indigenous cultures and environments in which it is used. In other words, language must be situated within proper setting of native culture (Malinowski 1923, in Duranti 1997:216). This precept highlights two major concepts in Malinowski’s ethnographic theory of language, namely, the notion of context of situation, and the view of language as a mode of action (Duranti 1997:216).

These concepts are also central to an approach in ethno linguistics known as the ethnography of communication or ethnography of speaking, developed by Dell Hymes. Ethnography of communication is that orientation in linguistics research that considers speaking to be a system of cultural behavior, and language itself as a dynamic element of culture which, like any other aspect of the latter, partly shapes the whole (Hymes 1974: 89,127). The general goal of the approach is to investigate how language is used in situational context, and how the multifarious aspects of society and culture may influence communicative events and patterns in any particular community. Accordingly, social/cultural context is considered to be the starting point of analysis and understanding (Hymes 1974:9).

The present study acknowledges and incorporates the main principle of ethno linguistics along with Malinowski’s field methodology. His famous prescription for fieldwork methods included the following guidelines.
• “The organisation of the tribe and the anatomy of its culture must be recorded in firm, clear outline. The method of concrete, statistical documentation is the means through which such an outline has to be given.”

• “Within this frame, the imponderabilia of actual life, and the type of behaviour have to be filled in. They have to be collected through minute, detailed observations, in the form of some sort of ethnographic diary, made possible by close contact with native life.”

• “A collection of ethnographic statements, characteristic narratives, typical utterances, items of folk-lore and magical formulae has to be given as a corpus inscriptionum, as documents of native mentality.” (Senft, Ostman, & Verschueren, 2009)

2.1. Scope of the study

This study is an attempt to reflect Gujjar culture and worldview by studying their language Gojri. How their views and beliefs are shaped by their culture and how they phrase these views through the use of language. The present study deals with the Ethno linguistics aspects of the language spoken by Gujjars from the point of view of communication and social identity. Moreover, it is the description of material and non material aspect of culture.

2.2. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To study the origin, antecedents, distribution, location, and demographic and life style of the community.
2. To study the cultural patterns by studying their social repertoire, division of society, living patterns, housing and settlement pattern, religion, festivity, etc. and how they are encoded in the language.

3. To study in depth the rites and customs related to the life cycle rituals and beliefs associated with them.

4. To study the language use pattern, attitude and prestige of the community.

5. To study the Kinship system among the Gujjars. It also deals with the specific greeting and addressing patterns used in the community.

2.3. Location of the Present Research Study

Field work for the present research study was conducted in Fakir Gujri area of Srinagar district in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The settlement is located in the footsteps of the beautiful hillock of Mahadev. This colony is spread over 50-60 sq km’s of land. The researcher went to different areas of the community in order to interact with maximum number of people.

2.4. Duration of the field work

The field work portion of research was carried out for two years in three different phases. The researcher made an initial exploratory visit to Fakir Gujri in 2012. The data collection took place in different phases. In the first phase it took the researcher a lot of time to build a good rapport with the informants and to get culturally immersed with them in order to know their set up in a better way.

In the second phase, after the initial orientation of the research period the researcher followed a more systematic methodology by participatory observation, conducting interviews, recording events etc. In the third phase the researcher, while writing the thesis, visited the community again in order to validate the interpretations.
of the knowledge. With every subsequent visit to the community the researchers learning experience within Gujjars culture got deepened which provided fresh insight into various aspects of work that the researcher had been doing and thus greatly enriching the study.

2.5. Process of Data Collection

The actual process of the data collection and subsequent interpretation and presentation of data took place in the following steps.

2.5.1. Field-work Preparation

Before conducting the research, the researcher had done some pre-fieldwork preparation involving the following steps:

2.5.2. Pilot Survey

Before conducting a proper field work, the researcher conducted a pilot survey of the community in order to have an indigenous knowledge about the community and their social set-up. The main aim and aspiration of the pilot study was to understand the nature and temperament of the people which latter helped the researcher in selecting the suitable informant (key informant selection). It also helped the researcher in recognizing the needs of various gadgets, aids and devices required for the survey.

2.5.3. Information collection

The researcher conducted a survey of the area and collected the information regarding basic demographic data such as age, occupation, marital status, and household composition.
2.5.4. Mapping

Another data gathering tool used by the researcher in the early stages of field work is ethnographic mapping. It is an attempt to locate people, material culture, and environmental features in space. The researcher was interested in mapping where people live, where they pasture their livestock, where various public and private building are located, how people divide up their land, and how the people position themselves in relation to environmental features.

2.5.5. Use of Library Material

The researcher consulted various research materials like books, magazines, newspaper articles, journals and internet for additional source of information. This documentary data also helped the researcher to supplement the information collected through interviewing and observation in the latter stages of life.

2.5.6. Collection of Genealogy

Another technique that the researcher utilized for collecting cultural data is known as the genealogical method, whereby all of the relatives of a particular informant are written down. When using the genealogical method, each informant is asked to state the name and relationship of all family members and how they are referred to, addressed, and treated. From this information the researcher can therefore how family members interact with one another and what behavioral expectations exist between different categories of kin.

2.5.7. Data Collection

The research techniques employed by the researcher to collect data for the present research include:
2.5.7.1. Participant-observation

The primary research methodology for culture based (ethnography) research is participant observation. The researcher has to study the people in their natural socio-culture settings by means of direct, face-to-face interaction and participation with the aim of understanding different ways of life from a native or indigenous point of view. By participating actively in various cultural activities in various socio-cultural activities the researcher gets immersed in the local culture. The researcher took part in the day to day activities like serving the food, attending ceremonies of birth, death and marriage, eating, observes the use of language in different domains and generally become part of everyday life.

Generally speaking, the researcher engaged in participant observation tried to learn what life is like for an insider while remaining, inevitably, an outsider. The researcher spent a considerable time in learning about the culture of the community, and became involved in everyday community life. This participation required researcher to develop social roles for herself within the groups concerned, by forming personal relationships with individual group members and part taking in various community activities. In this way the researcher got culturally immersed in the socio-cultural environment of the community. It is only by this cultural immersion and active participation the researcher experienced the reality as the native people do in order to perceive a native perspective.

2.5.7.2. Interview Technique

In addition to using participant observation, the researcher relied heavily upon ethnographic interviewing. This particular technique was used by the researcher for obtaining information or what people think or feel as well as what they do. This
technique helped in eliciting the data (oral history, linguistic profile, story-telling, certain aspects of kinship and folk-customs etc.) which the researcher did not collect through participant observation. The researcher collected information mainly by conducting personal interviews with the members of the Gujjhar community, most of whom were elders. The researcher interviewed students, government employees, farmers, house-wives, laborers, pastoralists etc. The researcher chooses different types of informants for collecting different aspects of data in different phases of the research. The variables related to informants employed are

i. literate/illiterate

ii. young/old

iii. working/non-working

iv. male/female

After the key informant selection process (i.e. carefully choosing reliable and well-informed informants) the researcher conducted the lengthy sessions of both structured and unstructured interviews for the investigation of cultural patterns. The researcher also made efforts to train the informants to systematically report cultural data elements and interconnection as the interview sequence unfolds. The researcher conducted both structured as well as unstructured interviews. The questionnaire included short answer questions which included yes/no questions and one word answer questions. For example,

1. What is the name of your mother tongue?
2. How many languages do you know?
3. Can you express your thoughts in your mother tongue?
4. Do you think other languages are easy to learn?
The researcher also used questions for various other domains like belief system (birth, rebirth, god, devil, etc.) which are connected with one another and several questions were asked to acquire information in same domain. For example,

1. Do the community people offer sacrifices?

2. Are the sacrifices actual or symbolic?

3. If actual, then which animal?

4. Who will perform?

5. Where will it be performed?

6. Does the community believe in superstitions?

2.5.7.2.1. Sample Questionaire

Here is the sample of the interview questionnaire employed by the researcher to collect data in various domains while interviewing the respondents.

I. Personal profile of the informant

1. Name of the respondent : 

2. Sex : 

3. Age : 

4. Education : 

5. Occupation : 

6. Residence/Name of the Settlement: 
   a) Alternate name, if any : 

7. Place of work : 

8. Informant’s birth place

9. Parents First Language : 

10. Marital status : 

11. Whether the Spouse belong to the same community or the other community:

12. Spouse’s Education : 

13. Spouse’s occupation : 

14. Community name:
   a. Name by which the community/mother tongue is identified:
   b. Indigenous name of the community/mother tongue:

15. Name of the community/mother tongue given by outsiders.

II. Oral history

1. How long have you been living in this place?

2. Where did you live before moving into this place?

3. Is this the original settlement of the community or did the community migrate to this place?

4. If the community has migrated, Does (some of) your people still live in the original settlement?

5. Name the other communities that live in your settlement:

   If so, what is the relationship with other communities- cordial/friendly/non-friendly/hostile?

6. How many clans are there in your community: Name them.

III. Settlement and Housing Pattern

1. Position of each hut and who is occupying which hut (size, elevation, situation) in hierarchy.
2. Materials used for building hut/house (wood, bamboo, concrete, brick, coconut leaf, grass etc.)

3. Structure of the hut/house.

4. What is the social set up of the community?

5. How is work divided across gender (division of labour)?

6. What are the different occupational activities in which the community people are engaged?

7. What is the economic condition of the community?

IV. Language identification

1. Does your language have a written form?

2. If yes, which script is used? Is there any book published in your mother tongue?
   a) If yes, provide details.

3. Do you have a language/cultural organization such as literary committee?
   a) If yes, provide details.

4. What are the other languages that you know?

V. Language Use

1. What language(s) do you speak at home: with grand-parents, spouse, children, siblings etc.

2. What language(s) do you speak at school: with teachers, friends.

3. What language(s) do you speak at the market?

4. What language do you use in dreaming, abusing, storytelling, etc?
VI. **Language Attitude**

1. Is your language/mother tongue easy to learn/speak: Yes/No
   
   a. If yes, compared to which other language(s)
   
   b. If no, compared to which other language(s)

2. Can you express your thoughts in your mother tongue: Yes/No

3. Do you accept mixing other language words in your mother tongue: Yes/No
   
   a. If yes, with which other language(s)
   
   b. If no, with which other language(s)

4. Do you think that one language is enough for all types of usages: Yes/No
   
   a. If no, which other language(s) should be included:

5. Do you think that your language will still be used 20 years from now? Yes/No

6. Do you think that your language is essential for day to day activities?

7. Do you prefer to marry a person who does not know your language?

8. Do you think your language is a hindrance to social economic mobility? Yes/No
   
   If yes, why?

9. Do you ever feel that your mother tongue is dying?

VII. **Rites of Passage**

7. What are the various types of rituals performed in the community?

8. Where does the birth of a child take place? What customs and traditions are followed during the child birth?
9. How is the naming ceremony celebrated? Who names the baby?

10. Does the circumcision, head shaving ceremony take place in your community?
   If yes, how and who performs it?

11. What type of marriage is practiced in the community? (Arrange marriages or any other practices)

12. What is the marriage system of the community (endogamous/ exogamous)

13. Does the community allow inter caste, inter community, inter clan marriages etc.

14. Is child marriage practiced in the community?

15. Is there a dowry system/bride price? If yes, who pays to whom and in which form (land, animal, money, bride price etc.)?

16. Whether remarriage is allowed? If yes, can widow remarry or only widower?

17. Is divorce allowed in the community? What is the process? Who settles the dispute and how (compensation-who pays to whom)?

18. What is the concept of death as per the community? What happens to the soul after death?

19. Where is the funeral held? Who gives the purification bath and where is the body buried?

20. For how long is the mourning period observed and what are the different events?

**VIII. Belief System**

1. Does the community have any specific belief system?
2. Do they believe in rebirth, god-devil, hell-heaven, salvation, punishment for the sins and rewards for the virtues?

3. What is the concept of sacred and profane in the community?

4. Is there any religious structure in the community? If yes, in which direction and what shape?

5. Do they offer sacrifices? If yes, what is the process, who will perform it and where?

6. Do the community people believe in magic (shamanism and communal cult)?

7. Do they believe in peers (priests/ native healers) and taveez etc.

8. Does the community believe in supernatural creatures, getting possessed, magic, black magic, casting an evil eye its effects, etc.

IX. Festivals

1) List all the festivals celebrated in the community. Religious festivals like Eid Ramzan, Navroz, Urs, etc.

2) Harvest festivals like Baisakhi etc.

3) What preparations are done for these festivals?

4) Are there any specific songs sung at the time of different festivals. If any document them.

5) Are there any dance types performed by the community people or were there any in the past( narrate in detail)

6) What types of musical instruments are played on these festive occasions? Who plays them who cannot?

7) Do men and women celebrate together or are there any restrictions imposed?
8) Are there any other rituals performed by the community people? For example offering sacrifices.

9) Who performs these rituals, who can and cannot participate.

10) What type of attire and costumes are used during festivals by common Folk, Priest etc.

11) What type of food and drinks are served during the Festivity is there any cultural significance?

X. Social Customs

1. Document all types of social customs in the community. Eg. Visiting relatives, friends, neighbors etc. For congratulating them on different occasions like
   A) When a child is born
   B) When somebody shifts to a new house
   C) Gets engaged
   D) Passes some exam
   E) Recovers from an illness

2. When and why are relatives, friends visited? (how frequent and for what purpose)

3. Who visits whom and when?

4. Do people visit their friends, relatives and neighbors in their illness?

5. Do women go to see men if they are ill.

XI. Material Aspects

1. What are the different ways of gathering food? (Hunting, Agriculture, Pastoralism etc.)

2. What is the staple food of the community?
3. What type of food is served on different occasions like marriage, death, festivals etc.?

4. Where do the community people consume food (while sitting on floor etc.)?

5. What types of utensils are used for serving the food?

6. Who can eat with whom?

7. What is the traditional ethnic attire of the people (men and women)?

8. What type of attire is used during festivals, marriages and other occasions?

9. Who makes the dresses and ornaments in the community?

10. Is there any difference in the dress pattern of young and old?

11. What is the cultural significance of dress and ornaments used?

XII. Modes of Address and Greeting

1. How do the community people communicate with each other?

2. Is there any variation in the communication strategy adopted by males while to females, by children while talking to adults, by insiders while talking to outsiders etc?

3. How are various kinship relations perceived by the community people and what is the importance of different relationships (husband-wife, father-mother, brother-sister, friends etc.)?

4. What are the various address and reference terms used for different kinship relations?
2.6. **Analyzing and Interpretation of the Data**

After completing the field work, the researcher carefully analyzed the data. Along with analysis, the researcher also validated the authenticity of the data collected by cross checking the information. After analysis the data is interpreted and a conceptual framework was framed for the present research study.

2.7. **Review of Literature**

In the past year ample of work has been done on Gojri by Jammu and Kashmir Cultural Academy and various other organizations and researchers. These include Gojri grammar, Gujjar history, Gujjar folk- dictionary, Folklore and various other dimensions.

1. **Anita Sharma, (2009)** in her book *The Bakkerwals* presents a sociological and anthropological review of the Bakkarwal community of Jammu and Kashmir in terms of their culture comprising of their community life, religion, traditions and language, art and craft, folklore, etc. The first part of the book introduces the lives of these nomads, and their lifestyle. In the second part there are brief discussions on various aspects of family, biradri (clan system) and power, religion and folklore. The focus of the study has been the understanding of the pastoral nomadic lifestyle of the Bakkarwals.

2. **Omkar Nath Koul, (2005)** in his book *Studies in Kashmiri Linguistics*, examines a linguistic and sociolinguistic aspect of the Kashmiri society. The present work deals with the structural analysis of Kashmiri language, its lexical borrowings, its script, etc. It also makes a sociological presentation of Kashmiri society, the study of personal names, kinship terms, modes of address and greeting used reflecting the socio-cultural, religious, and linguistic patterns of the society. The focus of the book is to
analyse the relationship between the Kashmiri language and society from the point of view of the use of language in Kashmiri society.

3. Lei Duan (2004), in his dissertation- A sociolinguistic study of language use and language attitudes among the Bai people in Jianchuan country China, analyses the language vitality and language attitude of the Bai People in China. The author examined the language attitudes of Bai from the broadest sense including various perspectives like culture, speakers, etc. The present work is divided into several chapters describing various aspects of the study like scope of the study, introduction about Bai people, their language and its genetic affiliation. It also investigates various social factors affecting the language maintenance and shift. It studies the language used in various domains and the differences in language use of Bai and Hanyu speakers.

4. Baker (1992), in his book Attitudes and Language makes a presentation of the language attitude studies in depth. The author discusses the language attitude theory and research in depth from different perspectives followed by the research on the Welsh language illustrating and advancing these issues. He points out that language attitude is an umbrella term under which resides a variety of specific attitudes.

5. Puja Mondal (1970), in her article Essay on kinship system in India, examines the kinship system comprising of various kin and kinship types and their role and importance in family. The article also studies the dimensions of kinship system in India and the importance of kins and kinship relations in primitive societies.

6. Kak (2002), in his book on language maintenance and language shift addresses to the language situation in Jammu and Kashmir at the time of ongoing separatist movement. The study aimed to understand the impact and influence of Urdu and
English on Kashmiri, in terms of the patterns of language use in Srinagar city of Jammu and Kashmir. The study focused on the analysis of the social and psychological tendencies in the direction of language preferences, the changing patterns of language use and linguistic assimilation.


9. K.S. Rajyashree (2001) in the paper titled Kodava Speech Community: An Ethno linguistic Study, presents the ethno linguistic aspects of the language spoken by this community from the point of view of communication, identity, and social reality. It deals with the language problem of the community at present and the future prospects for the development of their language. The conclusion of the study is that apart from being a strong token of identity, the Kodava language is a valuable means for transmitting cultural heritage to successive generations. With regard to the future
prospects of the language the author concludes that the language needs to be standardized on the one hand and empowered by introducing it in education and other domains of life on the other hand.

10. A.R.N. Srivastava (2010) in his book *Essentials of Cultural Anthropology* presents the anthropological concepts and theories which have influenced the mankind in the past, particularly in the twentieth century. He defines the major concepts of sociology such as defining society, community, association and so on. The book further analyzes the cultural institutions relating to society, economy, polity, folklore and art. The interesting part for this study is the description of the relation between language and culture in this book. This book contains examples from varied cultures of the world.

11. Dr. Guldana Sarbassova (2013) in the book titled Ethnolinguistic Description of Horse Culture in Eurasia analyzes the horse culture from the ethno-linguistic point of view in languages of the nations having different ways of social and political development, religion, culture, national identity and history. The book describes ethnolinguistically the Kazakh Horse Culture, discusses culture concerned with the Horse as a “Prism” of the Kazakhs’ national heritage, analyses history and myths in traditional Kazakh Horse Culture, and finally, language and identity in Kazakh Horse Culture. This is a descriptive study which describes Kazak Horse Culture and does not draw any specific generalization or conclusion.

The present study on Gujjars is entirely different as it is the blend of various shades of culture. It deals with an ethnolinguistic perspective of Gujjars in Jammu and Kashmir. The present study deals with social structure, kinship system along with material and non material aspects of culture through language. It also studies their language proficiency, use, attitude and prestige towards their own language and other
languages. As far, no such study has been done on Gujjar culture of Jammu and Kashmir. As mentioned above various eminent scholars like Javaid Rahi have worked on Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir but no such study has been conducted so far. The study is exclusive as it reflects all the aspects of Gujjar culture through their language.