ABSTRACT

An attempt has been made in the dissertation to examine the use of English for oral communication in a professional context, within the broad framework of what has come to be known as 'the sociology of language'. The relevance of this approach for the study of the covariation of language use with societal patternings, and of the relationship of social variables to attitudes towards English in a multilingual setting, has been examined against the background of some of the main approaches to the study of language. The focus of the present study is on the 'function' of English in oral communication in industries in Andhra Pradesh.

Though various surveys on language use in India have been conducted in the past, very little attention has been paid to the importance of methodological procedure for the effective conduct of such surveys. It was felt that an examination of 'process' could give one an insight into the 'product.' Besides, it would have implications for the predictability of certain methodological constraints in studies of language use in professional contexts in India. Hence the concentration on methodological procedure from the initial stages of the planning and organization of the study. Chapter Three describes in detail the procedure followed for the selection of industries, for sampling and
for the actual administration of the questionnaire. The
efficacy of the tools used for the collection of data is
also examined. A demographic picture of the sample then
forms the base for a detailed analysis of the association
between the use of English and the social variables: type
of industry (public/private), location of industry (urban/
rural), age, occupation, education, medium of instruction
at high school and function in the organization (Line/Staff)
(Chapter Four). The relationship between the employees' 
reported use of English and their exposure to English (news-
papers, magazines, journals, radio programmes) has been
examined separately. Besides being affected by these social
variables, the use of English vis a vis the Indian languages
is also influenced by psychological factors within the
individual, for example, his attitude. His attitude towards
a particular language affects his reported use of it in that
he reports what he should in his opinion use, rather than
what he actually uses. The attitude of the employees to the
importance of English for each of the seven functions that
have been selected at random, has been assessed and examined
in detail in relation to the social variables mentioned
above. The last section of Chapter Four indicates the
relationship between language use and attitude scores of
a few groups of individuals. Their tendency to have
higher language use scores than attitude scores is indicative
of the influence of their highly positive attitudes on their reported use of English, and the difference between the reported use and the actual use of language.

An examination of language use and attitudes has implications for language planning and language policy, for use is considered as one of the most important aspects of the implementation of language planning. Closely related to this is another important aspect — education. Chapter Five looks at the use of English and attitudes to English in industries in Andhra Pradesh in the light of the historical background for language planning and language policy in India and views it as feedback for future language planning and language policy. Methodological procedure having been considered as an important factor contributing to the planning and organization of a study of language choice and language attitudes in a multilingual setting, the usefulness of the tools used for the collection of data has been examined and a revision of these tools suggested on the basis of the discussion in Chapter Six.