CHAPTER – 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

A linguistic analysis of the basic vocabulary of Urdu speaking children of class V in Aligarh is carried out in this thesis. This analysis is based upon the vast amount of data collected from five reputed English and Urdu medium schools of Aligarh.

It has been observed that children belonging to different socio-economic strata display different types of vocabulary patterns. Children of the middle and upper social strata have more exposure to language than low-income group children. The difference in amount of time spent by the middle and high income group parents with their children considerably affects and determines range and size of children’s vocabulary. Low-income group children consequently lag behind the other children in respect of their vocabulary that becomes smaller in size than the middle income and high-income group children. The presence of more English words in the vocabulary of high income and middle income group children greatly adds to the richness of their vocabulary. Furthermore, classroom vocabularies and language use are closer to upper income group and middle income group usage than lower income group usage.
The present study is conducted with a view to determining the sociolinguistic aspects of the acquisition of children’s vocabulary belonging to different socio-economic strata. It also assesses the impact of school atmosphere, medium of instruction and peer group on children’s vocabulary. The work has been organized into four chapters.

Chapter I deals with the theoretical background and takes up the terms: acquisition, learning, theories of language acquisition, learning of language skills and elements. It also embodies some theoretical observations about acquisition of vocabulary and social determinants of vocabulary acquisition. It also throws a good deal of light on its scope of study. Research procedures are also described in details.

Chapter II of the thesis covers the word hoard of low-income group children studying at Urdu medium schools. The low-income group parent’s children have the smallest vocabulary. In the speech of these children, we have found phonological variant forms. The low-income group children freely substitute the five perso-Arabic consonants | ʃ z q χ x | with | s j k kh g |. Their speech also contains substitution of v, with b and b with v. Instances of contraction of longer words to shorter form and breaking of consonants clusters are pervasive in their speech. Low-income group children’s vocabulary shows 384 perso-Arabic and Indic words and 319 English loans. Interestingly
enough their vocabulary also shows some typical words which are entirely different in meaning and pronunciations, from the standard words. Such words are exclusively used by them and their vocabulary contains 45 class – specific terms such as: pi: lak , ‘egg yolk’ , ‘sikaṛ’ , ‘shrink’ etc.

Chapter III analyses the vocabulary items belonging to children of middle – income groups studying at Urdu and English medium schools. The middle – income group children display the total number of 992 words of these 992 words there are 659 perso – Arabic and Indic words and 331 English loans. An imperceptible difference is noted between English medium and Urdu medium school children with regard to the use of English loan – words. English medium school children like to use more and more English words in their day to day conversation. As regards perso – Arabic and Indic words there is almost no difference found between the two groups. Some middle income group children of Urdu medium schools coming from the localities mostly peopled by laborers, factory worker have phonological variant forms in their speech. Such as the substitutions of ğ zar kh with s j k kh and breaking of consonant clusters. It is important to note that the speech of middle income group children shows fewer phonological variant forms compared to lower – income group children.
Chapter IV of the thesis focuses attention on the word – hoard of children of high – income groups studying at English medium schools. An attempt is made to assess the impact of social factors such as home atmosphere, good income and good schooling etc on children’s vocabulary. The total number of words used by the high income group children’s is 1080. Out of 1080 words there are 520 English loan words that comes approximately to 50% of the total words, which is a clear manifestation of the fact that half of their (basic) vocabulary consists of English words. It is that the high income group children’s word hoard is 1080, whereas the middle income group and lower income group children’s stock of words is 972 and 748 respectively. This comparative study of the word hoard of Urdu speaking children studying in Urdu and English medium schools belonging to different social classes is confined to only class V students in Aligarh.

The analysis is based on extensively collected data. Our analysis leads us to conclude that there is wide disparity between different groups of children’s vocabulary.

It is found out that phonological variables tend to show fine stratification and there is more socially significant variation in the pronunciation of perso – Arabic consonants e.g. ĵ z x y g.
It is observed that variations are more marked between lower income group and middle income group children than between middle income and higher income group children.

The thesis is based on the analysis of variations in children’s vocabulary and focuses on several factors that account for differences between children’s word hoard. Since the thesis uses words that operate in real life of children and are concerned with their day to day experience, it gives us a fascinating insight into children’s vocabulary. The work has great possibilities of further work on vocabulary expansion by virtue of scrutinizing many words that do not belong to books and some of them are not frequently used. It is concluded that such an analysis of words, used by children in their conversation may be of great assistance to teachers for developing new paradigms and tools for enriching children’s repertoire of words.