Chapter III
Research Design

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodological principles adopted for the study. A detailed account of the research setting and the sample for the study is given followed by the tools adopted for the study. Each of the tools is discussed in detail from the design point of view. An overview of the procedure of data collection is provided with a step wise summary.

The social and cultural milieu in which learners grow up determines their beliefs about language and culture. Therefore, it is very important to pay attention to areas like learners’ socio-cultural background, people’s attitude towards various languages and the extent of exposure to those languages outside the schools. As mentioned in Chapter 1 (1.5), the study was carried out with the purpose to record the information about English language learner in the multilingual milieu of Gujarat. The study also intended to understand the learner and her desire, attitudes, expectations, difficulties, assumptions, learning habits towards and associated with mother tongue, and English. Along with these aims, following were the main research questions that helped in framing the design of the study:
1. What are the socio-cultural contours of the students’ geographic area, gender, age, parental education, SES, perception towards language and language learning, self efficacy towards languages, extent of exposure and opportunities for use of English?

2. Are there significant relationships among the following variables: geographic area, gender, age, parental education, SES, perception towards language and language learning, self efficacy towards languages, extent of exposure and opportunities for use of English?

3. What is learners’ general perception of English?

4. What kind of language environment is available to child?

5. What is learners’ perception towards English as the medium of instruction?

6. What is teachers’ and parents’ attitude towards English as the medium of instruction?

7. Do rural learners lack exposure to English in comparison to their counterparts in the urban areas?

8. What is teachers’ own perception of using English along with other languages?

9. What are teachers’ and learners’ beliefs towards language learning, especially English?

10. What is teachers’ opinion for their own ability in English use?

11. What are the reading habits of teachers’ and learners’ like?
3.1 Research Design

The present study was conducted using the survey method. A survey is a systematic method of collecting data from a population of interest. It tends to be quantitative in nature and aims to collect information from a sample of the population such that the results are representative of the population within a certain degree of error. As the focus of the study is to provide a sociolinguistic profile of English language learner in the multilingual context of Gujarat, a large quantity of data was required in order to draw appropriate inferences. The employment of survey method exactly fulfils the criteria required for such a study where large proportions of responses are required.

3.2 Method of Data Collection

The purpose of a survey is to collect quantifiable information, usually through the use of a structured and standardized questionnaire. The survey for the present study was conducted by collecting data with the help of structured questionnaires. Initially only one questionnaire was designed for the primary target group, that is English language learner at primary level. Later it was also decided to design questionnaires for the teacher and parents, to obtain adequate data to achieve the objectives of the study. Subsequently, the questionnaires were also translated in the respondents’ mother tongue considering the fact that the primary target group belonged to a very young age-group. Finally, the data
was gathered through questionnaires administered among the learners, teachers and parents residing in different parts of the state.

### 3.2.1 Target Population

The target population for the study were the learners of English at Primary School level in various parts of Gujarat. The scope of the study was narrowed down by delimiting the target populations as only those learners who are at the beginner’s level in the state. Further, it was decided to collect relevant data regarding other stakeholders such as the parents and teachers from different schools working in rural, semi-urban, and urban area.

### 3.2.2 Method of Sampling

In view of the very large size of the target population, it was necessary to adopt stratified random sampling as an appropriate method to arrive at a representative sample. The samples were drawn from various types of schools in different zones of the state i.e. English Medium Schools [urban, rural, tribal], Non English Medium Schools [urban, rural, tribal], and Special Education School or Minority School (Appendix II). For instance, the schools which responded in great number from the west of Gujarat were from Rajkot and Jamnagar; Banaskantha district from the north; Ahmedabad, Kheda, and Anand from the central zone of the state; Surat, Bharuch, Narmada, and Navsari from
the south zone of Gujarat. Figure 3.1 given below would clarify the district wise distribution of sample.

![Districts from which schools participated](image)

**Figure 3.1** Districts from which schools participated

It was decided that the researcher would identify ten centre districts from the state, preferably from the place where the number of respondents are likely to respond more. It was decided that from each of the centre districts information about fifty learners, five teachers, and ten parents to be recorded. Consequently, the data was gathered from the following districts: Rajkot, Surat, Baroda,

3.3 Research Tools

Since this study was a survey type of research, it involved data collection on a large scale. Therefore, it was decided to collect information on selected variables with the help of structured questionnaires. For this purpose, three master tools were produced in English, which subsequently translated into the mother tongue of the respondents. These tools were:

1. A questionnaire for the Learners
2. A questionnaire for the Teachers, and
3. A questionnaire for the Parents.

Hence, questionnaires were prepared and administered to gather data from three different target groups; the learners, the teachers and the parents.

3.3.1 Reasons for using questionnaires

As indicated earlier, the prime aim of this study is to construct a data based scenario of English language learner at primary school level in multilingual social context of Gujarat. This necessitates eliciting responses from large sample of population for data gathering. Thus, the survey method was found more suitable for the present study. As Cohen and Manion (1985) as cited in
Nunan (1992, p.140) point out, the purpose of a survey is to obtain a snapshot of conditions, attitudes, and /or events at a single point in time. Moreover, the questions included in the questionnaire were many. To handle many questions, obviously, the objective questionnaires were preferred as they allow the respondents to attempt all the questions.

Furthermore, since the data are “amenable to quantification” (Nunan, 1992, p.143), and less dependent on the researcher’s interpretation than may be the case with other research methods, questionnaires provide a relatively objective platform for launching further probes. Cohen (1998, p. 39) also acknowledges the value of such data when “elicited with care and interpreted with full understanding of the circumstances under which they were obtained”. A questionnaire, therefore, was chosen as the initial instrument for the current study since it could be used in its own right as a means of gathering interesting insights.

3.3.2 Questionnaires format

Most of the questions in all the three questionnaires i.e. the learner’s, the teachers’ and the parents’ questionnaire support each other and are slightly replicative in nature. The questions were aimed at collecting data on variables like geographic area, gender, age, parental education, teachers’ education, SES, perception towards language and language learning, self efficacy towards languages, extent of exposure and opportunities for use English and so on.
The questionnaires consisted of a variety of closed questions: multiple choices, preferences or ranking, and short responses to get the various degrees of possible responses. While constructing the questionnaires, adequate attention was paid to the wording of the questions. It was made sure that the researcher’s attitudes are not revealed through questions while framing them. Furthermore, the questionnaires were also translated into the mother tongue, that is Gujarati considering the following reasons:

- To have qualitative and accurate data collection and to keep in mind remote areas (rural and tribal) of Gujarat.
- Since the parents and learners might not be able to read or to understand English.

In the process of translating questionnaires available sources like bilingual dictionaries and websites were used. The translated first drafts were checked by experts on the campus. While translating the questionnaires from English into Gujarati the researcher faced some problems like selecting appropriate Gujarati word according to the reference, which were sorted out with the help of experts’ feedback. However, a few questions were repeated in several forms, hence it was easy to copy and complete the questionnaires.
The following section describes each type of the questionnaires (Learner’s questionnaire, Teachers’ questionnaire and Parents’ questionnaire) in detail.

### 3.3.3 Questionnaire for the Learner

This study primarily aimed to prepare profile of English language learner in the multilingual context of Gujarat. In that sense, learners of English at primary level are at the center for the present survey. Hence the questionnaire for the learner was designed with the purpose to obtain true snapshot of their conditions, opinions and attitudes towards languages like English, Hindi, and Gujarati.

The final questionnaire for the learner comprised of 28 question items. (Appendix III). The questionnaire was designed in such way that it could gather information in terms of four aspects:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.1 Components of the Learner’s questionnaire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Demographic information (Factual information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name, age, gender, residential – school address, medium of instruction, parents’ education and occupation, annual income and so on.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Exposure to different languages at home
   Exposure to language through TV programmes, sources of reading material in different languages, listening to stories from parents/grandparents and so on.

3. Functional use of languages at different locations and on different occasions
   Frequency of using various languages at home, in family, in neighbourhood, at school with the peer group outside the classroom, with peer group in neighbourhood

4. Perception towards different languages
   Language that they desire to learn more, difficult language, easy language, important language and so on.

The questionnaire was designed with varied types of closed questions in order to obtain appropriate information from the respondents. The objective of eliciting large quantity of factual information of the child was to frame correct socio-economic status of the child. Hence, the information like age (Q. 2), gender (Q. 3), class (Q. 4), location (Q. 6), medium of instruction (Q. 7), parents’ qualifications and occupation (Q. 10, 11, 12, & 13), approximate income of the family (Q. 14), number of members of the family living in the same house (Q. 15) were included in the questionnaire. As a matter of fact, respondents’ demographic background is considered as one of the essential type of questions by Patton (1987) as cited in Brown (2001). The other types of
questions identified were: behaviour/experience, opinion/value, feelings, knowledge, and sensory perceptions.

Followed by demographic information, information related to child’s exposure to different languages at home was ascertained through varied questions. For example, access to television at home (Q. 16-a), preference of language in TV programmes (Q. 16-b), priority of languages in reading materials at home (Q. 17), habit of listening stories from elders (Q. 18) and so on. Furthermore, the following question items i.e. no. 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24 were designed in the form of five point Likert scale, from ‘never’ to ‘always’. These questions were primarily framed to discover the child’s choice and frequency of language use in different social contexts, for example language used in the family at home, in neighbourhood, with peers at school outside the classroom, and with peers at neighbourhood. The last portion of the questionnaire, comprised questions related to the learner’s perception to different languages. For example, which language learners find easiest(Q. 26), which language learners find the most difficult (Q. 27), which language do they desire to learn more (Q. 28-a), and for what reason (Q. 28-b). To this end, the questionnaire tried to cover a range of questions like problems, priorities, abilities, and attitudes as indicated by Rossett (1982) as cited in Brown (2001).
3.3.4 Questionnaire for the Teacher

The questionnaire for the teacher is designed keeping in mind the objectives and research questions of the study. The questionnaire designed for the teacher consisted 51 question items in total. Primarily, all the questions were of closed-type, but with varied style, for example, list, category, ranking and scale. Although, half of the questions in this questionnaire were similar to the questions of the Learner’s questionnaire, many questions were added to deduce teachers’ opinion on aspects like nature of language and language learning, their self-efficacy towards different languages, and attitudes towards different languages (Appendix IV).

As a result, the first part of the questionnaire was designed to gather demographic information (background) of the teacher, for example, age (Q. 2), gender (Q. 3), location (Q. 5), medium of instruction at school (Q. 6), educational qualifications (Q. 7), in-service training received (Q. 8), teaching experience as a Primary School Teacher (Q. 9), and so on. Question Item 11 was framed with the purpose to find out teachers’ self efficacy in different languages. The question was framed in such way that it could discover teachers’ ability in four language skills (LSRW) listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The question was based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (nil) to 5 (excellent).

The questionnaire also comprised questions (Q. 15-18) looking for information on teachers’ functional use of languages at different locations in different
settings. These questions were designed based on five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always) in response to the teachers’ frequency of language use (MT, Hindi, and English) at home, in neighbourhood, at social gatherings, at the place of work, and at child’s school. The last part of the questionnaire was comprised of a series of statements seeking responses on five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Primarily these statements were designed seeking teachers’ attitude towards notions associated with nature of language (MT, Hindi, and English) and nature of language learning. The table given below gives the brief summary of the statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception towards MT, Hindi, &amp; English</th>
<th>MT/Hindi/English should be compulsory at the primary level.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MT/Hindi/English is necessary for national integration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MT/Hindi/English is necessary to get a good job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MT/Hindi/English is a prestigious language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MT/Hindi/English is very difficult language to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MT/Hindi/English should be the medium of instruction at the primary level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MT/Hindi/English is a language of empowerment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception towards nature of language learning</td>
<td>Reading MT/Hindi/English newspapers, magazines can improve one’s English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watching TV programmes in MT/Hindi/English is useful.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3.5 Questionnaire for the Parents

The questionnaire for the parents was designed on the similar lines of questionnaire for the child and the teacher (Appendix V). Therefore the first part of questions were framed to collect demographic / background information of the parents, for example, age, gender, address, location, educational qualifications, occupation, approximate income of the family and so on. Question item.9 was similar to the question of teachers’ questionnaire where the respondent’s ability in the language skills is discovered. The question is designed on the basis of five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (nil) to 5 (excellent). Moreover, question item 14-17 look for information on parents’ functional use of languages at different locations in different settings. These questions were designed based on five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always) in response to the parents’ frequency of language use (MT, Hindi, and English) at home, in neighbourhood, at social gatherings, at the place of work, and at the child’s school. The last portion of the questionnaire is alike the last part of the questionnaire for the teacher. It contained a series of statements seeking responses on five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The statements were designed seeking parents’ attitude towards notions associated with language (MT, Hindi, and English) and nature of language learning.
Second language learners study in a wide variety of different settings, each of which is likely to cater for a different type of student. Hence, the research setting is an important consideration when attempting to draw inferences and make generalizations. The research setting for the present study was the state of Gujarat. Like many other states, Gujarat has witnessed many shifts in terms of policies regarding English language teaching in general and introduction of English at particular level in specific. However as mentioned earlier, at present, English has been introduced from the first standard, though on optional mode. In reality majority of the learners come across English only during their 5th standard at primary level.

The sample for this study consisted of three different groups i.e. the English learners at primary level, the teachers and the parents. In total 487 learners had responded to the questionnaires. The learners were aged between 6 to 13 years and consisted of 290 boys and 197 girls. The gender wise ratio of the total sample is evident in the figure given below.
A point that may be made here about the learners is that irrespective of where they come from the different of rural, semi-urban and urban background, they have either nil or the barest minimum exposure to English outside a formal classroom environment. For most of them the language that they speak as their L1 is Gujarati.

The next sample group of interest for the present study was that of teachers. In total 49 teachers from different schools responded to the questionnaires. Among them 26 were male and 23 were female. The teachers had reported to have teaching experience ranging from one year to more than ten years. In the sample group of parents, total 144 people answered the questionnaire including 112 males and 32 females. The figure 3.3 given below displays the sample size of the teachers and the parents.
There have been debates on the issue of how big a sample size should be. Fowler (1988) as cited in Nunan (1992) dismisses the common misconception that the adequacy of a sample depends on the fraction of the population included in that sample. A key consideration in determining sample size concerns the subgroups within a population that may need to be separately identified (Nunan, 1992). In the present study, large quantity of data is tried to be gathered to represent the target population.

Figure 3.3  *Genderwise Distribution of Sample: Teachers and Parents*
3.5 Research Procedures

Step 1

Since the survey was primarily focused on creating profile for English language learner at primary level in Gujarat, initially only the questionnaire for the learner was thought to be the source of data collection. For the questionnaire of learner, a series of questions were framed keeping in mind the objectives and research questions which were designed prior to the actual survey.

Step 2

The series of questions were categorised and classified according to different components. Although almost all questions were that of closed-type, responses were projected in different style, for example, simple yes-no questions, ranking questions, in terms of frequency and agreement on the basis of five-point likert scale. Nevertheless, it was kept in mind that the questionnaires do not seem overly long as otherwise respondents are likely to get off soon.

Step 3

The questionnaire prepared was piloted with a small group of learners studying in one of the primary schools of Vallabh Vidyanagar. The significance of piloting the questionnaire has been entrusted by many, for example, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) citing different scholars (for example, Oppenheim, 1992; Morrison, 1993 and Wilson and McLean, 1994) enlist advantages of piloting the questionnaire, for example, to identify ambiguous
items, to check readability level for the target audience, to get feedback on the types of questions and its format, and of course, to check the clarity of items, instruction and layout. In the process of piloting it was found that many of the students faced some problem in responding to certain questions in English. This was also due to difficult terminology and a few of complex sentence construction.

**Step 4**

Thus, the final questionnaire was modified keeping in mind the suggestions received through the pilot programme. In view of the difficulties they faced in understanding some questions, the questions were reframed for clarity to arrive at the final questionnaire. Moreover, the questionnaire was also translated into Gujarati and sent to experts for the validation.

**Step 5**

The questionnaire for the learner was finalised incorporating the feedback and suggestions made by the experts for both the versions i.e. Gujarati as well English. In addition to this, the experts also suggested to design questionnaires for the teacher and the parents which would ultimately add to the value of data gathered through the learner’s questionnaire.
Step 6

The questionnaire for the teachers and the parents were designed following the guidelines of the learner’s questionnaire. The new tools were also piloted before arriving at the final version. Like the questionnaire for the learner, these questionnaires were also translated into Gujarati.

Step 7

These questionnaires were administered over a period of eight months. First of all selected schools were approached in different districts. The teachers were contacted personally in order to get their responses to questionnaire. Not many teachers returned the filled questionnaire on first encounter. To get the questionnaires back as soon as possible, follow up telephone calls were made to the respondents (teachers). This was to increase the rate of return of the questionnaires. Bailey (1982) indicates that the response rate may increase (by as much as to 30 percent) when appropriate follow-up is used. This indeed proved helpful in data collection. All possible opportunities were used to get the questionnaires filled-in and returned. While administering the questionnaires, the teachers were assured that their identity would remain anonymous.

Step 8

The questionnaires for the learner were administered in the schools beginning with schools where the teachers had returned the questionnaire in no time. The
quick response to the questionnaire revealed the willingness on the part of the teacher. The teachers eventually played the role of coinvestigator while administering the questionnaire. Meanwhile, some teachers who had come to the H.M.Patel Institute of English Training & Research for in-service training programme, were approached with a request to administer the questionnaire of the learner at their schools. The teachers who volunteered for this work were personally contacted and a session was conducted for the discussion of administering the learner’s questionnaire. The same group of teachers were approached for their help in administering questionnaire for the parents too.

**Step 9**

With all possible efforts, the researcher managed to receive 487 questionnaires of the learner. Similarly, the number of questionnaires received for the teachers and the parents were 49 and 144 respectively.

**Step 10**

The data obtained from the close-ended questions were quantified and transferred to computer for analysis through SPSS software. The data was later tallied, tabulated and analyzed quantitatively and interpreted using frequencies, and percentages. Moreover, the data was classified in the light of the objectives and the research questions of the study. The attempt was made to compare, and correlate different variables, to examine and ascertain the correlations between and among the variables in the light of the hypothesis for the study.
3.6 Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology of the study. An attempt has been made to describe the sample (in terms of demographic background as well as the perception that they hold for different languages and its use), the research tools (questionnaire for the child, questionnaire for the teacher and for the parents), method of sampling, and description of samples for the present study. In each case, an attempt is made to give detailed descriptions and the rationale behind the actions and decisions taken during the course of the study. The next chapter presents the analysis and interpretation drawn on the basis of data gathered through research tools.