Chapter V
Findings and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

The earlier chapters presented the background of the study, the research design, the processes of data collection, analysis of the data gathered and its interpretations. This chapter reports overview of the research, the findings based on the data analyses, enlists their implications, and ends with a set of recommendations.

5.1 Overview of the Research

This survey is intended to construct a data based scenario of English language learner at primary school level in the multilingual social context of Gujarat. To create such a sociolinguistic profile of English Language learner in the state, a number of objectives were kept in mind, including the objective like interpreting the sociolinguistic perspective in language learning in relation to other social variables like geographic location, gender, age, parental education, perception towards language and language learning and so on. Although the prime focus of the study was English language learner, data was also gathered from the parents of learners and the teachers at primary school level. This was done in order to construct a larger picture of sociolinguistic perspective of English language learning prevailing in Gujarat.
The following steps were followed to carry out the study. At the beginning, key issues and concepts related to sociolinguistics and English language learning in Indian context were indentified through precedent literature and research and incorporated into the structure of the present research. Next, the drafts of the tools used in the study were constructed in the light of the objectives of the study. The decision of separate questionnaire for the teachers, the parents and the learners was evolved through the discussions with the experts. These tools were shared with different scholars for expert validation. For this, the first draft was submitted to the supervisor and experts on the campus. With the inputs gained, the tools were revised and trialed on selected learners, parents and teachers at primary school level. After gathering information through the pilot survey, an examination into how the respondents responded to the questions was made. From this draft, the final versions of the questionnaires were made.

The questionnaires were administered over a period of eight months in schools of different districts. Meanwhile, the teachers who had come to H M Patel Institute of English Training and Research for in-service training programme were also approached with a request to administer the questionnaire at their schools. A training session for administering the learner’s questionnaire was conducted at the institute. Later the same teachers were approached for administering questionnaire for the parents.
In total, 487 questionnaires were received from the learners, 49 from teachers and 144 from parents. Subsequently, the data received were quantified and transferred to computer for analysis with SPSS software. Thus, the data was classified, analyzed and interpreted in the light of the objectives and the research questions. The significant findings arrived at in this manner are presented below.

5.2 Findings

5.2.1 Demographic patterns

- Of the total sample of learners of English, the urban sample has a larger number of girls, i.e., in rural Gujarat fewer girls were in schools at primary school level when the study was conducted.
- Similarly, in terms of even medium of instruction, as compared to boys, more girls are enrolled in Gujarati medium schools. Fewer girls are enrolled in English medium schools.
- The data regarding parents’ educational background shows that a larger number of mothers of learners of English are illiterate as compared to men. A significant number of women (mothers of English learners) are not in a position to read or write.
- Most of the female parents of English learners are housewives whereas male parents are distributed in various professions.
5.2.2 Patterns of Social Perception Towards Languages

a. Learners’ Perceptions

- Most of the learners of English consider their mother tongue ‘easy to learn’ and English ‘the most difficult language to learn’ (refer 4.5.1).
- The boys as well as the girls desire to learn English more. There is no significant difference between the male and the female learners’ desire to learn English (refer 4.5.2). The result of Pearson Chi-square test applied to the variables of ‘gender’ and ‘desire to learn English’ revealed that the significance value is greater than .05 (chosen α value), which confirms that there is no association between gender and their desire to learn English.
- There is a significant difference between the urban and the rural learners’ desire to learn English. A significantly higher number of learners in the urban areas have expressed their desire to learn English (refer 4.5.3). Even, the results of Pearson Chi-square established the association between different location learners of English belong to and their desire to learn English.
- There is a positive correlation between the learners’ desire to learn English and their approximate annual income. The correlation is also proven statistically significant through Pearson Chi-square test (refer table 4.9). In that sense, as family income increases the percentage of
learning English is raised. This could be the result of the urban learners’ awareness of advantages of learning English in real life.

b. Teachers’ and Parents’ Perceptions

- A majority of the teachers at primary level either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that English is a difficult language to learn. However, nearly 40% of the parents of learners still feel that English is a difficult language to learn than other languages.
- Teachers and Parents are on equal ground in terms of aspirations associated with English language. English is considered as the prestigious language as well as the language of empowerment by a majority of the teachers and parents of the learners of English. At the same time a majority of the teachers as well as parents consider English an essential tool in order to get better jobs in future.

5.2.3 Functional Use of English in various domains

a. Learners’ use of English

- In terms of language use, most of the learners of English in both Gujarati and English medium schools use their mother tongue (i.e. Gujarati) at home, in neighbourhood, and with peer group at school.
The use of English in interpersonal communication comes second to the mother tongue. Even learners in English medium schools do not use English in neighborhood or with peers outside the classroom at school.

Similarly, for majority of learners studying in English medium schools, English is not the frequently used language in family.

b. Parents’ and Teachers’ use of English

- In terms of language use at social gatherings, a majority of the parents from rural or semi-urban background use Gujarati. Only, a small proportion of parents in urban area use English occasionally.

- In terms of use of English at different places, English is not the language of use outside the school for majority of the teachers. In other words, most of the teachers do not use English at home, in neighbourhood, or even at social gatherings. However, a significant number of teachers use English at school.

- Not only the vernacular medium teachers but teachers from English medium schools too do not use English in most of the situations of daily life. School is the only place where teachers use English. Thus, for most of the teachers, mother tongue is preferred over English for communication outside the classroom.
5.2.4 Teachers’ Perception of Self efficacy towards Languages

- The data regarding teachers’ ability shows that a majority of the teachers feel they have satisfactory, good or excellent command in terms of their language competence in the four basic skills in Gujarati. Even in Hindi they feel that they are reasonably good. In English some of the teachers feel that they have inadequate ability in Speaking skills.

- In comparison to English or Hindi, a majority of the teachers have the habit of reading in Gujarati at home, i.e. reading of books, magazine, and newspaper. However, a good number of teachers also stated that they have the habit of reading in English at home.

5.2.5 Attitude towards Teaching English and Language Learning

- A significantly large number of teachers as well as parents either agree or strongly agree with the statements suggesting that the teaching of all - mother tongue, Hindi, and English should be made compulsory at primary school level. At the same time a majority of the teachers as well as parents wish that the medium of instruction at primary school level should be the mother tongue i.e. Gujarati.

- A majority of the teachers are of the view that reading in English would improve one’s English.
• A majority of the teachers either agree or strongly agree with the statements suggesting that listening to songs in English or watching TV programmes in English would improve one’s English. Most of the teachers believe that the more the exposure to language one gets the more one is likely to improve her language.

5.3 Implications

In spite of the popularity and propensity to learn English amongst people of Gujarat, irrespective of the region (rural, semi-urban, urban) that they belong to, the present study reveals that the use of mother tongue i.e. Gujarati in interpersonal communication is highest in all spheres of life. Its use is greater at home, in neighbourhood, and at social gatherings. In that sense, English plays a marginal role in the domestic and neighbourhood networks. Not only the learners studying in Gujarati medium but learners from English medium schools also prefer Gujarati in all domains of life. Furthermore, this study reveals that the use of English is slightly dominant in urban areas and that too in some formal contexts, for example at work place and at school.

The present study reveals the wide-spread demand for English and the desire for teaching of English at primary school level from the first year of education in Gujarati medium schools. Learners of English need to be exposed to listening and speaking in English. For such experience, we need to bring out
new types of teaching and learning materials (in print and multimedia form) in order to help learners acquire linguistic skills adequately. Primary teachers too need to adapt these new resources along with enhancing their own proficiency in English. There is a need to create equal grounds for education among both male and female learners at primary level. Moreover, the teacher’s role in teaching English as a second language at primary school level becomes more important especially in the scenario like Gujarat where half of the parents (mainly men) of learners have received education only up to class XII, and a large proportion of mothers of learners are not in a position to read and write even in mother tongue. Not only the teachers of vernacular medium schools but the teachers of English medium schools too need to be adequately equipped with the skills to teach language effectively in such a sociolinguistic context.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations can be presented on the basis of the above findings.

- Professional development courses and training programmes need to be restructured to meet the actual needs of teachers of English. The programmes should consider the teacher’s background and motivation. These programmes also require continuity and sustainability.
• A full scale national survey be taken up to study the sociolinguistic issues concerning the teaching of English at primary school level. Such a survey can be conducted involving a larger sample bearing different locales keeping in mind the demography, linguistic contour and emerging socio-economic trends of the country.

• The tools used for the present study can be adopted for the national level survey. However, there is a scope for alteration, if required, by adding elements like use of English in media i.e. print as well as electronic, in entertainment and so on. In addition to the questionnaires, interviews of different stakeholders in education can be conducted which would also add value in creating sociolinguistic profiles of learners in multilingual context.

• As the tools used in the present study were translated into Gujarati in order to generate appropriate response from the respondents, similarly master tools in English can be translated in to all the state languages of India for the purpose of the National survey.

5.5 Conclusion

It is evident that there is a great demand for the study of English at all levels. However, there is also dissatisfaction amongst people as well as educators regarding the declining standards of English partly because the demand is outstripped by supply of qualified teachers. Further, the proliferation of English
medium schools in towns and villages during the recent years is not only the result of requirement from the society but also a consequence of government’s failure to provide adequate facilities for teaching of English in schools with mother tongue as medium of instruction. In this context, there is a need for curricular reforms that are learner-friendly and suitable to multilingual context.