CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSION

The present study was carried out with a view to finding out the differences between the adult females and males speech. Earlier the same variables had been tested on adolescent males and females in my M.Phil study. There are certain similarities and some differences between the two age groups.

According to a general belief females' speech is considered to be different from males' speech but this is not because of their sex but because of their inferior position in the society and because of the double standards prevailing in the society. Holmes (1990) has rightly pointed out that the use of hedges in the repertoire of females is a reflection of their inferior position.

Notions like conservatism and innovation emerge from double standard attitudes. Females, on the one hand, are said to be conservative and, on the other hand, blamed for not bringing innovation in language.

The explanation that why women use more standard forms than men may be relevant in some social groups, but it is certainly not true for all. For example: In case of friendly interaction or in particular a mother-child interaction, she tends to be very relaxed and informal, and
in informal contexts, the vernacular forms occur in everyone's speech. Standard forms are typically associated with more formal and less-personal interaction. It seems quite odd to explain women's greater use of more standard speech forms by referring to a woman's role as a speech model in a very intimate and mainly unobserved interactions with her child or friend.

A sophisticated version of this explanation could be that by using more standard forms women are looking after their own needs to be valued by the society. It could also be said that by using standard forms, a woman is protecting her 'face', in a way she is avoiding offence to others. The women's greater use of standard forms may relate not only to their own face protection needs but also to those of the people they are talking to. It is also an evidence to women's sensitivity to their addressees.

Men's usage is being taken as a norm against which women's is being measured. Women's behaviour is being assumed as aberrant. Why should standard or 'correct' behaviour be regarded as requiring explanation? In fact it is men's speech which uses fewer standard forms, not women's. So instead of asking 'why do women use more standard speech forms than men?' Isn't it advisable to ask 'why don't men use more standard forms?'
This conservatism may be seen here also with regard to the use of phonological variants and polite forms. It has been observed that the variant forms used by females are less as compared to males. The number of variant forms in the casual speech of the males is quite high. Even the frequency of switching of these variant forms depending upon the context is slightly reduced among the females. With regard to the use of polite expressions, although they are present in the repertoire of both males and females, it is females who are expected to observe them more as compared to the males. According to the data analysed the adolescent females were more polite in same-sex conversation as well as mixed-sex conversation but now in case of adults, though the females were generally polite but when provoked, they also used certain aggressive command-oriented expressions even in mixed-sex conversation. The results of the variables in question are contrary to the unsaid belief and understanding among females with regard to their expected behaviour. May be this was because the females consider themselves to be equal to males and think that it is not only their duty to be always polite. This presence of polite and impolite expressions in the repertoire of both males and females and frequent use of variant forms by both sexes may be because of the age factor. They both had a similar opportunity of education and share the experiences arising
from the milieu outside their home.

It is also believed that females are more status conscious than males because their lifestyle confers very little status in itself, hence they were expected to talk less or rather keep silent. But nowadays it has been observed that females are not as status conscious as they were in the past because they have also acquired the status by moving out in the society. They hold certain responsible chairs. Today they also talk a lot, discuss not only their hobbies alone, but issues which are related to topics of contemporary interest and they even raise their tones in course of discussion with a view to asserting their points of view which are all much against the strictures passed.

Generally the girls do two things with speech:

1. They create and maintain relationship of closeness and equality. They recognise the speech right of others, let others speak and do not infringe upon others turn. They do not grab the floor by unnecessarily interrupting the speech of others as compared to the males. The use of minimal responses and back-channel noises are evidences of their cooperative attitude and active involvement.

2. They criticise others in acceptable ways i.e. even if they do not agree to something they do not become
aggressive in order to prove their own point as compared to the males who normally snub the females and even cut their conversation short when they are not able to prove their own point.

The males also use the speech in two major ways:

1. To assert one's position of dominance i.e. they always want to dominate on others, even through speech.

The males seem to be less cooperative in conversation. They also reject the topics raised by females and at times snub them or even cut their conversations short if they are unable to prove their own point. They perceive themselves to be the protector or savior of the helpless one's. They sometimes indulge in saving the females from the other members of the conversing group. This false perception renders the feeling of superiority and dominance over females. This dominance may also be seen from the manner in which they delete the agents. Although agent deletion is known as the prerogative of males, they use it as a token of dominance and superiority because they do not want to acknowledge the presence of the females and even the work done by them. In adolescent group it was exclusively used by males but in adults, both males and females used them.
2. To assert oneself when other speakers have the floor i.e. while the other person is still speaking they will interrupt and try to grab the floor which the females will never do.

Interruptions and overlaps, the two irregularities in the turn taking of conversation may seem to be present more among the males as compared to the females. Both the adolescent and adult males interrupted and overlapped the speech of females as well as males. In case of females, they did not interrupt the speech of males. However, with regard to the same-sex group conversations, both interruptions and overlaps may be seen, although the degree of irregularities is different. In "current speaker selects next" technique, the current speaker whether a male or a female selected the next speaker at the transition relevance point. But is was a bit problematic is self selection technique where more than one speaker wanted the next turn. Here the misprojection of a transition relevance point gives rise to overlaps.

The aspect of dominance has emerged strongly from the analysis of the data. As part of their cultural stereotypes and beliefs embedded in the communicative competence, the males speech behavior is marked by the presence of condescension, belittlement and topic control over and above the interruptions and overlaps. The dominance
may also be seen from the use of commands. Sentences length, sentence incompleteness, back-channel noises and minimal responses.

Generally males speech is marked by the presence of certain explicit commands used purposely in order to express their dominance. And, on the other hand, the females speech is marked by the use of modalized interrogatives. In our study on adolescent males and females it was confirmed that males used explicit commands and females used modalized interrogatives but now in the present study on adults it was found that even the females used explicit commands in their speech. This suggests that sometimes the females also refuse to accept the males dominance and their sense of superiority.

Sentence length and sentence incompleteness is the result of males interruptions, overlaps and topic control. The males interrupt the speech so much that usually the females leave their sentences incomplete.

From the collected data we also noticed that both the males and females used the back-channel noises and minimal responses, but they both used them for different purposes. Females used back-channel noises like *hmm, mm* to show their cooperation and allow the conversation to further
continue. This may also be due to the fact that males don't let them speak too much and infringe upon their turn to speak. If the back-channel noise is used, they may be interpreted as the indicator of their involvement.

Minimal responses such as ʰᵘ, ʰ̅, ʰ are also used by both adolescent and adult females and males but in different ways. The males used them to display lack of interest. The monosyllabic responses merely filled a turn at a point where it needed to be filled for example man's response ʰᵘ after a lengthy remark of a woman is neither to encourage her nor to elaborate. Such minimal interactions operate to discourage interactions.

Women's use of minimal responses, on the other hand, was as "support work". This insertion throughout the stream of talks rather than at the end indicate that they are constantly attending to what is said, that they are demonstrating their participation, their interest in the interaction and in the speaker.

Though males and females have different topics of discourse but they had enough and equal knowledge on the topics laid before them. In mixed-sex group conversation the females seem to be cooperative and they show their active involvement in the conversation while the males
reject the topics raised by females and impose their own topics. They cooperate less if the females try to initiate the conversation and they even cut short their conversation.

The females are said to use tag questions more than males. To some extent this proved to be true in case of adolescent females because they used more tag questions than males. But in case of adults, both the males and females used tag questions with equal intensity. To what extent this may be treated as a reflection of their unsure state of disposition is difficult to establish. However, at the face value this may be suggested that even males are not sure of what they are saying and they also need the confirmation and assurance as much as the females require.

It has been pointed out earlier that the presence of hedges in the repertoire of the females marks the inferior social position which females enjoy in the society. Although in the study on adolescents it was found that males speech included modals, hedges were absent in their repertoire but in the present study on adults both the females and males speech included modals and hedges for example: *jēseKe, mere Xvēl se, Xaleban, Xēr* etc. Now again the question arises that to what extent this statement is true that hedges are present in the speech of those who are
in an inferior position in the society and it is also a token of insecurity.

Generally females are said to use more adjectives than males and this was confirmed that in both adolescents and adults, the females used more adjectives than males but there were certain adjectives which were common to both in the present study for example descriptive adjectives were used by only adolescent males but in case of adults both the females and males used them. Pronominal adjectives were used by both adolescent and adult males and females. But limiting adjectives were exclusively used by males. And adjectives of endearment and adjectives of approximation were exclusively used by females.

Possessive construction like mera, hamara etc were also used equally by both females and males.

Generally females are said to use reduplicated forms more than males and it was confirmed in case of adolescent females but in the present study both the males and females used total reduplication and also the partial reduplication with equal intensity but the echo-forms which are considered to be a part of non-standard variety, were exclusively used by males. This may be because males generally use non-standard variety and females do not.
In field range females and males seem to include different lexical items in their total repertoire depending on the range and kinds of field in which they are involved. For example there are certain colour terms which are common to both adolescent and adult females and males such as lal, hara, nila, pila, gulabi, bhura etc but there are some colour terms such as rani, uda, pyazi, mehandi, badami etc which are exclusively used by females. This may be due to the females sensitive nature as they observe things very minutely in comparison to males.

It is also a general belief that females use euphemisms more than males as they are in a habit of not saying things directly but from the data analyzed we noticed that both males and females used the euphemisms. Even in case of slangs which are generally believed to be the field of males and therefore, are expected to be used by them alone are, contrary to this belief, used by females as well.

Swearing to, which is a reflection of insecurity and powerless language, and therefore solicits confirmation, is seen to be used exclusively by females.

Earlier in adolescent females and males the interference of english language was not so much as it is in adults case. maybe this was because the adults are more
exposed to the society and knowing English is considered as a status symbol.

So in the end we can say that although the times are changing and there are a lot of opportunities for females like education and jobs. Now they have acquired status by moving out in the society. They don't accept the traditional norms laid before them by the society. The speech of both the sexes has been influenced by each other's speech. Even the males use the language which was once known as women's language but even after all this the males try to dominate over females and they consider themselves to be superior to females.