8.0 Introduction

The basic limitation of language surveys, which are based on self-perceptions and self-reports, is that they depend on global ascriptions with regard to actual competence and performance. The questionnaire used in this project to describe the use of English in various contexts—mass media, spoken communication, and written communication—should be expanded and improved to provide better measures of language use in a multilingual community. As mentioned in section 7.3, chapter 7, if one has to develop a language policy for a state/union territory, one needs to have a better understanding of how proficient the subjects are in the various skills of different languages and to what extent they use a language or a combination of languages.

One needs to find out how reliable the results of this research are. This can be verified with the help of the observational method used for at least twenty percent of the subjects. My hunch is that the results of the questionnaire study are reliable. This hunch is based on the analysis of the results of this project:

a) Most of the respondents varied their responses on the five point scale for the use of language in part III and on the five point attitude scale in part V of the questionnaire. If the respondents were to exaggerate their responses, many of them would have ticked points 4 (more in English than in the MT) and 5 (always in English) for most of the interlocutors
in most of the domains in the questionnaire, as English is a prestigious language.

b) The fact that most of the respondents did not mention English (a prestigious language) as a language used by their mothers is an indication that they carefully evaluated their responses. Therefore, "If indeed self-reports with regard to language use are quite reliable, then perhaps expensive and time consuming observational methods are not necessary for drawing up a profile of the language use patterns of a community" (Gonzalez 1985; 70).

8.1 An Alternative to the Observational Method

The observational method being time consuming and uneconomical, we can choose as stimulus samples of connected free speech. We can use the methodology adopted by Wölick (1973) in studying language attitudes. We can use this methodology to study language use. The following method can be used in lieu of the observational technique to confirm the reliability of the questionnaire technique. In order to prepare the test stimulus, two topics could be chosen:

i) a personal topic like 'buying furniture for the household'

and ii) an official topic like 'the Chief Minister's visit to office/college.

Two educated speakers are chosen to discuss these two topics. Probably, scripts can be prepared on the above two topics using the following guidelines:

1) the discussion in the mother tongue only

2) the discussion in the mother tongue with a few sentences in English.
3) partly in the mother tongue and partly in English

4) the discussion in English with a few sentences in the mother tongue

5) the discussion in English only

The speakers are requested to discuss each topic, or read the already prepared scripts on each topic five times, each discussion/reading lasting one to two minutes only. Each topic and range of language will have two sets of conversation:

1a) a conversation on the topic of 'buying furniture for the household' between a male and a female speaker

1b) a conversation on the topic of 'buying furniture for the household' between two male speakers

2a) a conversation on the topic of 'the visit of the Chief Minister to the office/college' between a male and a female speaker

2b) a conversation on the topic of 'the visit of the Chief Minister to the office/college' between two male speakers

This distinction of two pieces of conversation (one between a male and a female speaker and another between two male speakers) on the same topic is necessary because it will be more appropriate to play 'the conversation between a male and a female speaker' for female respondents. Similarly, it will be more appropriate to play 'the conversation between a male and a female speaker', while asking a male respondent about the choice of his language for conversation with his mother, wife, daughter etc.
Thus, we will have the following possibilities:

- **all in the MT**
  - between a male and a female speaker
  - between two male speakers

- **in the MT with a few sentences of English**
  - between a male and a female speaker
  - between two male speakers

- conversation on 'buying furniture for the household'
  - partly in the MT and partly in English
    - between a male and a female speaker
    - between two male speakers

- or

- conversation on 'the visit of the Chief Minister to the college/office'
  - in English with a few sentences in the MT
    - between a male and a female speaker
    - between two male speakers

- all in English
  - between a male and a female speaker
  - between two male speakers

Only five domains - three informal and two formal - can be chosen.

These are the domains in which there is a high probability of using either of the above two topics with most of the interlocutors. The three informal domains are home, neighbourhood and friendship and the two formal domains
are education and place of work.

The above mentioned taped conversations are played to respondents before the questionnaire is given to them. Suppose the first respondent is a woman. Then we play the five pieces of conversation between a female and a male speaker on 'buying furniture for the household' and on 'the visit of the Chief Minister to the office / college'. The respondent is also given a questionnaire as follows:

You will be played a set of five conversations on the topic concerning 'buying furniture for the household'. Please listen to each conversation carefully and tick the appropriate number of conversation that you think appropriately represents your conversation on this topic with the following people:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of the conversation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>with father</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with husband/ wife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with son/ daughter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with brother/ sister</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The respondents are played the set of five conversations for each inter­locutor. This procedure is repeated for the second topic on 'the visit of the Chief Minister to the office/college. An advantage of this technique is that, at a time, a number of respondents can be made to answer the same questionnaire. It is assumed that the results of this test will be very close to the results of the observational technique and can be compared to the results of the second questionnaire, which will be similar to the questionnaire used in this study and in which more direct questions are asked.

8.2 The Questionnaire

Part I of the revised questionnaire (given in Appendix B) was intended to provide me with the background information of the respondents. It was found during the analysis of the data that the distribution of religion in Chandigarh is not an important distinction as most of the respondents are either Hindus or Sikhs. Therefore, the column on religion may be deleted. It was also found that the district of the birth of a respondent does not give us any information. Thus the column pertaining to district may be deleted. In the case of column 10, the distribution of the respondent's proficiency in different languages into 1 = not at all/with difficulty; 2 = fairly well; 3 = well; 4 = perfectly may be changed into 1 = no knowledge; 2 = low; 3 = medium; 4 = high; 5 = excellent.

The reported order of preference of a language for any one of the relatives (father, mother, brother, sister etc.) need not necessarily be a clue to his/her preference for a particular language. 22.94% of the respondents mentioned English as the first language in order of preference
for father. This seems to be exaggerated. Therefore, it is suggested that the frame of reference used for the respondent's own proficiency in different languages may be improved and used for the relatives also. Therefore, one of the columns for the proficiency for father may look like:

What languages including English do/did your father know?

Please mention the appropriate number that you feel indicates your father's proficiency under each box:

1 = no knowledge; 2 = low; 3 = medium; 4 = high; 5 = excellent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Proficiency in</th>
<th>Level of Proficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other, specify</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The argument against the use of the order of preference for the language proficiency of the relatives is also applicable to part II of the questionnaire (on mass media). It is, therefore, suggested that the frame of reference from the order of preference may be changed to the frequency at which respondents read newspapers, magazines and novels, listen to the radio broadcast and watch the T.V. news. Therefore, question 1 of part II may be presented in the revised questionnaire as follows:
Do you read newspapers?
If yes, then tick the appropriate box against each language:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language of the newspaper</th>
<th>not at all</th>
<th>rarely</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>daily</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other, specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part III of the questionnaire is concerned with the use of English/MT. The study of the use of language in eight domains was related to the variation in role-relationship and in topic. No attempt was made to study the effect of the place (locale). Fishman (1972c; 251) explains that "domains, too, are locale-related in the sense that most major social institutions are associated with a very few primary locales". The study of locales will help us study the effect of locales on certain domains, if respondents mention that they vary the use of English and MT with an interlocutor with variation in locales. If we choose two locales, one that seems usual and primarily associated with a domain and another which is not normally associated with the domain, we may be able to study the effect of locales. Thus the question for the domains of neighbourhood and friendship may look like:
Tick the appropriate box under column D that you feel appropriately represents your use of language with the interlocutor under column C. Each box under column D stands for: 1 = always in the mother tongue; 2 = more in the mother tongue than in English; 3 = equally in the mother tongue and English; 4 = more in English than in the mother tongue; 5 = always in English.

The above procedure is repeated for a third topic, if one wants to include it, for the domains of friendship and neighbourhood. Similarly, the other domains are presented to study the effect of domain, role-relationship,
topic and locale on the reported language used.

We found that the five point scale used to study language use was quite useful and, therefore, it is suggested that this scale may also be used for future research.

In part IV of the questionnaire (Appendix B), the respondents were asked to list the language that they usually used to correspond with some of the interlocutors and the language that they used to write letters for official purpose. A respondent may be using more than one language with different frequencies to write letters. Therefore, it is suggested that the frame of reference for written communication may be changed to how frequently respondents use a language for written communication. The question for personal written communication may now be presented as:

How often do you correspond in each of the languages under column B with the people or for the purpose mentioned in column A?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLUMN A</th>
<th>COLUMN B</th>
<th>COLUMN C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not at all</td>
<td>rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with father</td>
<td>in English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in Hindi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in Punjabi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.</td>
<td>in any other language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The statements in question 2, section V (Your Opinion) of the questionnaire need modification. There was an imbalance in the number of statements across different functions (see section 6.0, chapter 6). For example, 'language for impersonal use' has seven items, 'language for education' has six items, 'language for personal use' has three items and 'language for communication between people from different states' has only two items. The imbalance exists not only between the number of statements for different functions but also between the statements with positive load and the statements with negative load for English for each function/category. For example, under category A 'language for impersonal use', statements 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 have positive load and statements 6 and 7 have negative load for English. For category B 'language for personal use', statements 8, 9 and 10 have positive load for English. There is no statement with negative load for English under this category. Similarly, in category E 'language for education', statements 23, 24, 25 and 26 have positive load and statements 27 and 28 have negative load for English.

A large number of positive or negative statements are likely to bias the results. It is possible to reduce this by making an attempt to distribute positive and negative statements under each category as evenly as possible. A list of modified statements is given in Appendix D.

8.3 The Interview Schedule

This research project was conducted on the basis of a questionnaire filled in by the respondents. They were not interviewed and were not asked direct questions concerning their use of English and their attitudes to the various aspects of the use of English and mother tongue. However, it
is felt that an interview should be used as an additional tool for obtaining information that can supplement and verify the information obtained by the means of a questionnaire. It would be worthwhile to interview all the respondents but if this is not possible, then a certain percentage of respondents, ranging from twenty to fifty percent can be fixed. It would be appropriate to have a pre-planned interview schedule but the questions can be open-ended. The interviewer should begin each interview with a short but clear account of the nature of the project, its aims and most important of all he should explain the rationale behind it. The interviewer may explain that the aim of the interview is to get information for the research. A knowledge of the mother tongue of the interviewee can be of great help. It may be quite useful to occasionally use the mother tongue to create a more friendly and informal atmosphere so as to get maximum information from the interviewee.

8.4 Sociolinguistic Surveys

There is a greater need to carry out similar surveys on the use of English in other cities of India, probably at the national level, to get a complete picture of the language choice and language attitudes of educated Indians in general. Because of a great utility of such sociolinguistic surveys for language planning, Ohannessian and Ansre (1975; 51) mention:

"If language is vital to an understanding of a society and to the promoting of that society (i.e. national development) then it seems necessary to have as accurate a picture of language in use in that society as possible. Such a picture would help towards a better understanding of what the situation is, in order that thought may be given to what it ought to be and how this goal may be achieved without doing violence to the society. One major task of sociolinguistic surveys, therefore, is to provide as relevant and accurate a picture as can be obtained for the consideration of those, responsible for decisions on language policy".
Similarly, Ferguson (1975) has mentioned that accurate and reliable information on the language situation of a country can be used in making policy decisions and can be of tremendous value in planning and carrying out the implementation of the policies.

Ohannessian and Ansre (1975) point out that in most societies that are accepted to speak the "same" language, there are groups that are linguistically distinguishable. Therefore, "a great deal can be learnt about the aspirations, loyalties, presuppositions, prejudices, fears, and other feelings of the members of a society through an understanding of how they behave linguistically" (Ohannessian and Ansre 1975: 52). Such behaviours would include patterns in which various social groups utilize one or more languages, the patterns of languages used for different occasions and under different circumstances, the patterns of behaviour and attitudes of a group towards its mother tongue and the other tongue in a multilingual situation. Therefore, it is necessary that a national survey is carried out to study the similarities and dissimilarities in the range of use of English in other cities like Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta Madras etc. to study the use of English in different states in India. It is possible that, by carrying out a national survey, we might arrive at a national pattern of use of English.

Education in modern societies is the most important agent for social change. There is a great need to find out what linguistic factors make a person "educated", what is the status of a language in society, which language is responsible for group solidarity etc. The knowledge of these factors is important in a country like India, where there is no common
"indigenous" language. Therefore, the most important decision to be taken for a country like India will be what language or languages should be used as the medium(s) of instruction at various levels in the process of education. The important decision to be taken in this respect is the choice of the medium of instruction for the primary school. There can be three choices in a multilingual country with a colonial past. In the Indian situation, it could be a) the mother tongue, b) Hindi or c) English. The choice of English will be related to many questions that can be answered in a national survey. These questions have been very aptly described by Ohannessian and Ansre (1975; 61-62). The questions are:

a) What proportion of the population does actually use English and for what purpose?

b) For what groups or occupations is English vital?

c) Will it be put to use by early dropouts etc.?

d) What is the extent of the use of English in urban versus rural areas?

e) Should initial literacy in English be accessible to all children?

f) What are the manpower resources of the country for teaching English?

g) Should language aptitude be a criterion to teach English?

h) What are the attitudes and aspirations of parents for their children to study and acquire English?

i) Would teaching initial reading in English to selected groups be regarded as discriminatory?
Ohannessian and Ansre (1975) also give the examples of the U.S. bilingual educational programmes for which the awarding of funds was not based on the sociolinguistic situation. Similarly, Ghana's 1950 Accelerated Development Plan in Education failed because of the unrealistic nature of the proposals. Therefore, there is a need to assess the realistic nature of the educational programme with reference to the use of English or the mother tongue as the medium of instruction at the primary/secondary school level on the basis of a national survey.

The role of English in the economic development of India is another important area, which needs to be evaluated on the basis of a national survey. A great deal of information on the language of commerce and trade can be gathered from a national sociolinguistic survey. In all developed and developing countries of the world, there are two levels of economic activity, the major (often national and international) and "local". In a multilingual community, the national and international trade and business is carried in an international language and the "local" trade in either international or a local language.

We have only given a few areas that can be benefitted by a sociolinguistic survey. The other areas of interest can be civil administration, armed forces, and public and private sector companies. It will be worthwhile to conduct national surveys based on the questions listed by Ohannessian and Ansre (1975: 61-62).

We conclude this section with the views of Ohannessian and Ansre (1975), who mention that the major use of sociolinguistic surveys is to give as much information as possible to the many individuals or groups that have the task of making decisions on matters related to language.