CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSIONS

We find in chapter 3 that a majority of the respondents across all the mother tongue groups - Hindi, Punjabi and other Indian languages - have reported excellent proficiency in all the four skills - understanding, speaking, reading and writing - in English. A large majority of the respondents have also reported a high/excellent command of all the four skills in Hindi. Both the Punjabi-MT and Hindi-MT respondents have indicated some proficiency in Punjabi. Within the same MT (Punjabi or Hindi) group more respondents can understand and speak Punjabi than can read or write it. The use of the other Indian languages is only restricted to the other-MT group and the knowledge of the other Indian languages among the Punjabi-MT and Hindi-MT groups is found to be rather rare.

There is relatively more use of English in the domains of education, place of work and government than in the other domains, which proves that English is preferred in a formal context. There is relatively greater use of the MT in the domain of home, in spite of the fact that most of the interlocutors - father, brother/sister, husband/wife and son/daughter - are educated Indians.

The English-MT bilinguals in Chandigarh use a code-mixed variety of English, except in the domain of shopping. The domains differ among themselves to the extent English or the MT dominates the code-mixed variety of language. English dominates the code-mixed language of the formal
domains of education, place of work and government and the MT dominates the informal domains of family, shopping, public place and neighbourhood.

We find in chapter 4 that domain, role-relationship and topic have a significant effect on the reported language used, though the effect of topics on the language used is not so great or wide as the effect of interlocutors.

The results of the present study as compared to the Greenfield (1968) study have shown that English can have a different range of use in different bilingual communities (see section 4.6, chapter 4). English in Chandigarh and in India is used in a multilingual context, where English is not the MT of the majority of the population. On the other hand, Puerto Ricans in New York use English in a context, where English is the MT of the majority of the population. Therefore, it is important to study the use of English in other cities of India in order to analyse the similarities and differences in the range of use of English. There is also a need to compare and contrast the range of use of English for spoken communication in countries like India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria etc., where English is a transplanted language with the range of use of English by the migrant communities in the U.K and the U.S.A, where English is the MT of a large majority of the population.

The respondents' age, education, occupation, mother tongue, sex and exposure to English affect the use of English for spoken communication. Relatively higher use of English is associated with the younger age group, the higher education group, the higher occupational group, the other-MT
group, the female sex and the high exposure to English. The women respondents use significantly more English in the domains of home, friendship, education and place of work. Labov (1972a) and Trudgill (1974) have discovered that female speakers prefer the use of the prestigious linguistic variant. In the present study, we find that the women respondents use relatively more English (the prestigious language) than men. This indicates that women, in general, tend to use the more prestigious language or the more prestigious linguistic variant of a language.

We also find that newspapers, magazines and novels in English are preferred by the respondents to newspapers, magazines and novels in Hindi, Punjabi or the other Indian languages. On the other hand, both Hindi and English are the two most preferred languages to listen to radio broadcasts and watch the T.V. news. English is also the dominant language for written communication.

The respondents have positive attitudes towards the use of English for impersonal use, for communication between people from different states and as a language of education. The respondents have indicated negative attitudes towards the use of English and positive attitudes towards the use of the MT in most of the domains. They have indicated positive attitudes towards the use of a code-mixed variety of English-MT.

The respondents' age, sex, mother tongue, exposure to English and educational qualifications have not affected their attitudes towards various functions of language to a great extent. Though these social variables affected the use of English, they do not seem to affect attitudes towards English to a great extent.
It is discussed in chapter 7 that language planning should be directly related to the needs and attitudes of people in a state/country. Therefore, the positive value of English in Chandigarh should be recognised in the language policies of the government. One way of achieving this would be to maintain the "associate official language" position of English in the future and adopt it as one of the Indian languages. Officially, English should not be seen as a rival to Hindi, but rather as complementing it in a wider sphere of communication. The best way to improve the relative prestige of English in India would be to differentiate between British or American and a national (Indian) form of English. Therefore, English in India should be seen as a national associate language and not as an international language. Thus, if the standard of English is to be improved, a new public attitude towards English must emerge and this can be achieved by making English a compulsory language in class I in all schools.

It is observed in chapter 8 that the results of a questionnaire should be verified with the help of the observational technique. The results of the present project indicate that the results of the questionnaire study are reliable. As the observational method is time consuming and uneconomical, it is suggested that an alternative method to test the validity and reliability of the questionnaire technique may be used. A set of five conversations between two speakers ranging from all the conversation in the mother tongue to all the conversation in English on two topics - a personal topic and an official topic - be prepared. Each of the five conversations on each of the two topics is played to respondents and they are asked to mention which conversation appropriately represents their use of language with a given interlocutor.
The role of English in education and in the economic development of India and the use of English in civil services, in armed forces and in public and private sector companies are some of the important areas which need to be evaluated on the basis of a national survey.