CHAPTER II

AIM AND PROCEDURE

2.0 Aim of the study

The present study in the area of Indian English substantiates the assumption that there is a unique non-native variety called Indian English (IE). There are studies on IE but not much work has been done taking the spatio-cultural factor - north, south, east and west - which gives rise to some variations into consideration. As such this work looks into certain phonological and conversational features of South Indian English (SIE).

In this study, the researcher proposes to examine the core phonetic features of SIE. As not many have attempted to analyse the discourse features of the spoken variety of SIE, this study looks into it. The main thrust is on SIE, and theoretical considerations of discourse are given secondary importance. Discourse features in the thesis mean the features of conversation. It also considers the features that go into the making of discourse (conversation) - the usage, grammar, etc. This is thus a two-pronged study dealing with pronunciation of SIE and the conversational features of SIE.

2.1 Reasons for studying spontaneous conversation

The previous studies on IE generally used a prepared text to collect data. In such cases, the speaker tends to
be careful and attentive and keeps monitoring his speech. This results in artificial speech, hindering or restricting the scope of research. In order to get more authentic results, this study uses natural and spontaneous speech.

2.2 **Limitations of the study**

Since the conversation (the speech of the speaker) is not controlled by the researcher, the data may not have all the features that are usually noticed in the speech of south Indians. For example, in a word like *cricket*, it is observed that some south Indians insert an [i] before [r] making it [kiįket]. But such a feature did not appear in the data.

2.3 **Procedure**

2.3.1 **Collection of data**

A Philips mono-recorder (N2218) was used to record the conversations. As far as possible care was taken to do the recording in a closed room so as to minimize the outside disturbance. But for one informant whose speech was recorded in her office, for all the other informants the recording was done in their houses. The researcher herself recorded the speech of all informants except for two speakers from Kanyakumari, who were recorded on her behalf, by another research scholar belonging to that area.

2.3.2 **Informants**

Trips were made to some places in the four southern states of India, i.e., Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The informants were chosen at random, in the sense the researcher had no pre-conceived notion about
their spoken English. The minimum qualification that an informant had to have was graduation and the informants were in the age group of 25-45 years. Since the population of Andhra Pradesh (53,175,277) and Tamil Nadu (48,089,281) was more than that of Karnataka (36,839,222) and Kerala (25,244,369) (Krishan, Sumi 1991) out of a total of twenty speakers, six each were taken from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu and four each from Karnataka and Kerala. Most of the informants were complete strangers to the researcher. Just a few informants were acquaintances of the researcher. Some conversations were emotionally charged as the speakers felt strongly about something they were talking. The informants were given an information sheet wherein they had to give their particulars and it is reproduced below.

Particulars of the informant

1. Name : 
2. Age : 
3. Sex : 
4. State : 
5. Languages known : 
6. Language spoken at home : 
7. Medium of instruction at school : 
8. Educational qualification : 
9. Occupation : 
10. Listening habits : 
11. Reading habits :
2.3.3 **Topic and recording**

When asked to render or read out a readymade text, the subjects tend to have an affected quality in their reading. In order to get natural speech, the informants were not asked to read a given text. Also for the discourse part of this thesis, which focusses on both the phonetic and conversational features of SIE, a spontaneous talk was necessary. Hence each informant was gradually drawn into conversation. He was told that it would be recorded, but to put him at ease, the researcher conversed with him for sometime so that a genial atmosphere was created. The researcher then started the recording. This was done with an intention that the speaker would partially at least get over the nervousness of being recorded. The topics discussed were very varied, ranging from their profession, politics, to ideas on marriage (love versus arranged), sports and hobbies. The researcher opened and closed the conversations.

2.4 **Analysis**

The recorded data was played back on a Philips deck recorder (AW569). The analysis had to be based on auditory impression, as the data involved long stretches of utterances and as such instruments could not be used. Each recorded conversation was first written in the narrow phonetic transcription. It was a very narrow transcription giving
attention to even minor details. After the phonetic transcription, the data was again played back and the tone group boundaries, stress marks and intonation patterns were marked. The third time it was re-checked. Each session of transcribing the recorded data lasted for not more than 45 minutes as a long session would make the hearing tiresome and result in wrong analysis. For marking the intonation patterns Gimson's symbols (Gimson, 1980: 275-279) were followed. The pauses, other than the tone group boundaries, were marked by dots.

The analysis took into account the following:

- pronunciation peculiarities, intonation, grammatical peculiarities, usage, conversational features, idiosyncracies etc.

Features noted in the data were categorized as follows:

a) features which are common to the linguistic group recorded (e.g. only Telugu speakers have certain features)

b) features which are common to all South Indian speakers recorded.

c) idiosyncratic features of the speakers recorded.
d) features of conversation.

It was also interesting to notice some pan-Indian features in the data, and they have been categorized separately. These features are given in detail in Chapter III where we look at the linguistic features.