ABSTRACT

The problem of speech and language has been engaging the attention of psychologists and linguists for a long time. Psychologists deal with this problem under a sub discipline named, clinical psychology but the emphasis of this sub discipline is not on language problems but on the shortcomings of other human behaviors. Linguists on the other hand consider this problem under a sub discipline namely psycholinguistics, which is mainly allotted to language development (both normal and abnormal). Language and speech problems arising out of psychological reasons are discussed under psycholinguistics but speech/language problems which are the outcomes of brain disorders are dealt with, under neurolinguistics which can be considered as a branch of Psycholinguistics. This thesis makes a case wise psycholinguistic study of child language development and speech disorders in Urdu-Hindi speaking children. This study takes into consideration both types of cases, that is, the cases which have speech problems of psychological origin and also those having speech problems of biological origin. The majority of cases in this research work had speech problems of biological origin. Speech disorders of biological basis includes various structural deformities of speech organs like lips, tongue, teeth, hearing impairment, disturbance of brain, malformation of chromosomes and the like. In order to assess the disorders in speech due to different psychological and biological factors the proposed study spreads over six chapters.
The thesis begins with an introductory chapter, this first chapter sets about with a brief discussion on the definition of psycholinguistics followed by a section consisting of historical review of psycholinguistics. The third section carries definitions of psycholinguistics given by different scholars. The fourth section explicates the bifurcation of psycholinguistics into theoretical and applied areas. Thus section four comprises of two parts, namely theoretical psycholinguistics and applied psycholinguistics, taking into consideration various learning theories in general and language learning theories in particular under the heading of theoretical psycholinguistics, while the subsection of applied psycholinguistics discusses the applied areas of psycholinguistics and its further bifurcation into developmental and clinical psycholinguistics. The subsection carrying developmental psycholinguistics discusses various stages of language acquisition and the age at which a normal child acquires these stages, in order to study language developments in abnormal children. The subsection of clinical psycholinguistics talks about the various origins of speech disorders and its various types. The last subsection of section four discusses the field of neurolinguistics. The fifth section presents the review of the earlier works on the language of abnormal people. In the sixth and the last section of this chapter we attempt to present the scope of the present study.

The chapter two which is named as “Research Methodology” discusses the methodology which will be adopted for the proposed study. It consists of eight sections, with section one giving the introduction of the chapter. Section
two is devoted to the objectives of study. The third section carries the hypothesis set to be explored later in the thesis. The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh sections carry discussions on the things used for collecting the data, introduction of the special school from which major part of the data was collected, points on which data would be analyzed and how the findings will be presented in the thesis respectively.

The third chapter of this study discusses the disorders in children at the phonological level. Apart from other discussions this chapter mainly revolves around the case studies of children and these case studies are broadly divided into two groups. One group covers the cases that are mentally normal but carry phonological disorders due to some psychological reasons. The other group carries the discussion of various biological disorders followed by the respective case histories and the linguistic case studies of children. In this section we try to find out that which biological defect affects language in which way. Lastly the chapter concludes with the collective findings of all the case studies.

The Morphological disorders in children are taken care of in the fourth chapter of the present study. This chapter is being divided into six sections. The first section presents the introduction of morphology. The section two throws light on the standard morphological system of colloquial Urdu-Hindi. Morphological disorders are considered under section three. In this backdrop we discuss the concept of LAD, the surface structure and the deep structure as given by Chomsky. Further more a section of this chapter is devoted to the
explanation of a chromosomal defect—Down's syndrome because most of the cases, discussed in this chapter were having this chromosomal deformity. Various physical features and the chromosomal patterns of the patients are being attempted to explain with the help of pictures downloaded from internet. It also discusses the communication skills in Down’s syndrome children. The chapter is being concluded in the sixth section.

The fifth chapter starts up with an introductory account of “syntax”. In order to establish the disorders at the syntactic level the second section explicates the concept of syntactic standardization in colloquial Urdu-Hindi, with in the domains of psycholinguistics. The third section is accredited to syntactic disorders taking into consideration the possible syntactic disorders. The section four of this chapter deals with the discussion of a congenital deformity, namely ‘cerebral palsy’ which affects langue in an evident manner. This section also bears a subsection carrying case history and linguistic case study showing specific types of syntactic disorders in a cerebral palsied case. The last part of section four carries the discussion of agrammatism, which was the finding of the above case study. Fragile X syndrome is a chromosomal defect which also hampers the linguistic abilities in a marked way. A case having this genetic disorder was found and studied in the fifth section, thus prior to the discussion of its case history and linguistic case study fragile X syndrome has been duly explained. The last part of this section carries the findings of the case study which was dynamic aphasia. The chapter concludes in the sixth section.
The sixth and the last chapter summarize the thesis and submit the conclusions drawn from the present study.

Thus the aim of this thesis has all along been to focus attention on the issue of speech and language problems in normal and abnormal children that can accordingly be used to improve upon the speech therapy programs which are very important for deviant children to make their speech comprehensible.