

CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The data gathered through the procedures discussed in the previous Chapter is analyzed and interpreted in this Chapter. The responses of the children are collected through three main situations namely elicit response, structured test and playful situations are analyzed and interpreted which is substantiated with data collected through the in-depth study of language behaviour of ten children at home environment. This takes care of the first objective mentioned in Chapter I. The realization of the objectives 2 and 3 are also discussed in the latter part of the chapter.

The adult speech and standard language are considered for correct responses and children are rated accordingly. Care was taken to look into regional differences and colloquial forms that the children have used. The language development is rated in three levels namely stage I, stage II and stage III. In stage I some morphological inflections are included. In stage II, rest of the morphological inflections and transformations are included.

In stage III, syntactical categories like aspects and moods and sentence types are included. (Criterion for assessing language status are presented in Appendix 3).

4.1.1 Plural Markings

Acquisition of plural markings have been seen in three situations. Since elicit speech and playful situations do not provide contexts for all plural markings and allomorphs, obligatory contexts are provided in structured situations for all the morphemes and allomorphs. In structured situations comprehension and production ability of the children are seen. Table IA shows the percentages of pluralising suffixes uttered by children in three different situations. Table IB shows the percentage of acquisition of various plural forms in obligatory contexts both in comprehension and production.

In Malayalam the three basic forms of pluralising suffixes are Kal, mar and ar. Kal has got three allomorph, ugal, ngal and kkal. (Appendix 1). In playful situation the children have used the forms very sparingly In Malayalam there is a general rule that if a numeral is used before a word, even if it has to sound plurality, the suffix to mark plurality need not be used. Children in their spontaneous speech must have extended this rule. In elicit response and playful situations obligatory contexts can not be provided and can not conclude whether the

absence of plurals suffixes is due to the extension of that rule or because of not acquiring the same. In the structured test, obligatory contexts are provided for all plural markers in both the situations in comprehension and production. Table IB shows that percentage of acquisition of plural marking in obligatory contexts. The percentage is very high for each marker and it can be concluded that the children have already acquired all the plural markers and can use it appropriately.

4.1.2 Tense Markings

Acquisition of tense markings has been seen in three situations elicit response, structured test and playful situation. In Malayalam the two past tense markings are i and tu. However, they undergo morphophonemic changes and assimilations when added to verbal base (Appendix 1). Present tense marker is nnu and future tense is um.

Table 2A shows percentages of suffixes uttered by children in three different situations. Table 2B shows that percentages of correct responses given by children for the different past tense suffixes. Since there is no obligatory contexts for the various past tense markers in elicit speech and playful speech, in structured situation obligatory contexts are provided to make sure whether they have acquired them properly. Each suffix is seen in production clarity with two items each. Although children

have got the tendency to generalize one suffix (Rathi, 1986) it can be seen from the table that all children have acquired all the tense markers.

4.1.3 Case Markings

Acquisition of case markers are seen in three situations namely elicit response, structured test and spontaneous utterance in playful situation.

Table 3A shows the percentage of correct responses of the case suffixes in three different situations.

Malayalam has got seven case markers with few cases having allomorphs or two suffixes (Appendix 1). In elicit response and playful situation obligatory contexts are not provided for various case markers. So in structured situation obligatory contexts are provided for various case markers and Table 3B shows the percentage of correct responses by children and percentage of children giving correct responses.

From the table, it can be seen that the children have acquired almost all the case markers appropriately. The first case marker (accusative or objective) has been less responded correctly in situation but it has been correctly used in other situation. When going through the mistakes the children have

committed, it can be seen that the children commit mistakes where euphophonemic increments have to be added. The reasons can be other than linguistic. Same is the case with conjunctive or social case. If the word ends in a consonant before suffixing conjunctive case marker, euphophonemic increment is added. Here also children find it difficult to use them appropriately. Doting case markers have been used appropriately. So also the two genitive case markers. Among the locative case markers only one is used widely in Malayalam (Appendix 1). From table it can be seen that this marker is also used appropriately.

4.1.4 Empty Morphs

Table 4A shows the ability of children to use empty morphs. It was seen in three situations. It is evident from the table that the children have acquired the empty morphs and they can use it appropriately.

4.1.5 Post positions

Table 5 shows the acquisition of post position in three situations. It does indicate that children by the age of five have mastered the usage of post position. In structured test obligatory contexts are provided to see the acquisition of post positions. Comprehension and production ability of the children have been tested. High percentages do indicate that they have

already acquired the same.

4.1.6 Adjectives

Adjectives in Malayalam get the status by position and by adding *iya, a, aaya, ulla* (Appendix 1).

Ability of the children to use adjectives has been seen in three situations namely elicit speech, structured test and playful situation. Table 6 shows the percentage of children who could use adjective in elicit and playful situations; the contexts are not obligatory and the percentage is very low. To see the acquisition of adjectives in structured test, obligatory contexts were provided both in comprehension and production. Analysis shows that the percentage is not very low. From this it can be concluded that the children have acquired the usage of adjective forms appropriately.

4.1.7 Adverbs

Adverbs in Malayalam need not only be adverbs but also adverbial participle (Appendix 1). The acquisition ability of the children with regard to adverbs have been seen in three different situations namely elicit response, structured test and playful situations. Table 7 shows the percentage of children who could use the adverbs appropriately. The ability to use the forms in

obligatory contexts have been given in the table 7. From the table it can be concluded that the children can use the adverbial forms appropriately.

4.1.8 Pronouns

1. Personal Pronoun

Personal pronouns in Malayalam fall into three categories namely first person, second person and third person (Appendix 1). Children's acquisition of these pronouns were seen in two situations i.e. elicit response and playful situations. It can be seen from the table 8 that all children could use personal pronouns appropriately.

2. Reflexive Pronoun

There is only one reflexive marker in Malayalam (Appendix 1). The acquisition of this marker has been seen in two situations namely elicit speech and playful situations. (TABLE 8)

In elicit speech the percentage is very low while in playful situations the percentage is very high. The low percentage in elicit speech may be due to the fact that they did not get enough opportunities to use the forms in spontaneous utterances.

4.1.9 Definite Determiner

Definite Determiner can be remote definite determiner or proximate definite determiner. In Malayalam while seeing the definite determiner the demonstrative pronoun has also to be considered (Appendix 1).

Definite determiner has been seen in three situations, namely elicit speech, playful situations and also structured test. Table 9 shows the percentage of children using both the markers in elicit and playful speech. Table B shows the score sheet of children using definite determiners, proximate and remote determiners in comprehension and production. From the table it can be seen that there is only one child who could not use the markers in comprehension although in production he could use it appropriately. Since he also has used the marker appropriately in elicit speech and playful speech it can be concluded that he has acquired the form appropriately.

4.1.10 Indefinite Determiner

In Malayalam along with indefinite pronouns, certain words are also used to indicate indefiniteness (Appendix 1). The ability of children to use indefinite markers have been seen in three situations namely elicit speech, structured situation and playful speech. Table 10 shows the percentage of children using

indefinite markers appropriately in three situations. Table 11 shows the percentage of children using indefinite markers in obligatory contexts. From the fairly high percentage of acquisition of markers it can be concluded that the children have acquired the forms appropriately.

4.1.11 Affirmation

In Malayalam, the standard words for affirmation are two (Appendix 1). But it has got colloquial differences. It was difficult to know specifically whether they have acquired the forms in elicited speech and playful situation, whether they gave affirmation by either repeating the word or by nodding or by producing a nasal sound. So obligatory contexts were provided for both the standard forms in a structured test.

Table 12 shows the percentage of children using each item appropriately. It varies for each item. Four out of six have 50% or more. The percentage of items each child responded appropriately also indicates that 20 children have scored 50% and 5 children have scored 66.66% and three children have scored 83.33%. Number of children falling behind 50% is 2. It indicates that the children have acquired the affirmation forms although they have not mastered the standard form. The children have neither left any question unanswered nor answered wrongly. But the standard form has not been widely used.

4.1.12 Negation

Malayalam has got two negative markers (Appendix 1). The children's acquisition of these negative forms has been seen in three situations namely elicit speech, structured test and playful situation. Table 12 shows the percentage of children uttering two negative forms. However, their ability to produce correct forms appropriately in obligatory contexts was seen in structured situations. Table shows the percentage of children uttering negative cases appropriately. It can be seen that 90% or above have used the forms appropriately.

4.1.13 Interrogation

Utterance of interrogative pronoun has been seen in three situations namely elicit speech, structured test and playful situation. Malayalam has got five such pronouns (Appendix 1). Table 13 shows the percentage of children uttering those forms appropriately Table 13b shows the percentage of correct response for various questions. Since it was difficult to see their production ability, only comprehension ability was seen.

4.1.14 Verb types

In Malayalam three verb types have been used (Appendix 1). Children's ability to use these three forms have been seen in two situations namely elicit speech and playful situation. Table 14 shows the percentage of children using forms appropriately. Although transitive and intransitive verbs have been used appropriately, the usage of causative verbs were less. This can be due to the fact that there were no obligatory contexts.

4.1.15 Aspects

Malayalam has got six aspectual notions (Appendix 1). The ability of children to use these aspects have been seen in two situations namely elicit speech and playful situation. Table 15 shows the percentage of children using the different aspectual notions. The contexts were not obligatory and hence a single utterance has been considered to indicate acquisition. The responses show that the children have acquired different aspectual notions.

4.1.16 Moods

In Malayalam seven modal notions are recognized (Appendix 1). Table 16 shows the acquisition of various modal notions by children in two different contexts namely elicit speech and

playful situation. Since in both the situations the contexts were not obligatory single utterance has been considered for the mastery of modal notions. It can be seen from the table that the imperative mood has not been recorded for any child in elicited speech while it is 100% in playful situation. This is due to the fact that in elicited speech, children do not get opportunities to use imperative mood and this does not mean that they have not acquired it since all of them have used it in playful situation.

4.1.17 Embedded Sentence

Table 17 shows the ability of children to produce embedded sentence. In elicited speech 76% of the children have uttered embedded sentences. But in playful situation children have not uttered embedded sentences. In structured test six obligatory contexts were provided for embedded sentence. Table 17B shows high percentage of responses. It can be concluded from the results that the children can produce embedded sentences. This does not mean that they have not acquired the embedded type sentences.

4.1.18 Complex Sentences

Children's ability to utter complex sentences are seen in two situations i.e elicited speech and playful speech. In Malayalam subordination is attained by adjectival participle or adverbial

participle (Appendix 1). The children's ability to use various hookers of conjunction and disjunction. Table 18 shows the percentage of children using various hookers. Common hookers which denote conjunction and disjunction have been appropriately used by all children in elicited speech and 60% in playful speech. Single unit verb hookers have been appropriately used by 60% in elicited speech and 40% in playful speech. Multiple unit verb hooker has been used by all in elicited speech and by 20% in playful speech. In elicited speech 20% of the children have used noun hookers while in playful situation none of them have used.

It should be emphasized in this context that although children have used single unit verb hooker and multiple unit verb hooker all the forms have not been used by children. They have used only one form in each hooker. This throws light on the fact that the children although have started using complex sentences have not fully mastered these sentence types.

4.1.19 Compound Sentence

Table 19 shows the responses of children with regard to compound sentences. The result shows that the children are not very familiar with the compound sentences. Children in spontaneous and elicited speech utter elliptical sentences and naturally compound sentences are less used.

4.1.20 Imitation Task

An imitation task was given in which each child had to repeat ten sentences of increasing complexity and length. Investigator uttered the sentences thrice and asked the child to repeat them. Weightage was given to correctness in length and complexity. Table 20 shows the children's ability to use sentences of varying complexity and length. This is very important since it indicates the ability of children to comprehend and produce different structures in a sentence.

4.1.21 Story Comprehension

A comprehension passage was told to each child with the help of a series of pictures. Eight pictures were shown and each picture was described in two sentences. Eight questions were asked to each child showing the pictures. The question included various linguistic structures of the language. The task was designed to see how far the children can comprehend the different structures and respond appropriately. Table 21 shows the children's ability to respond to these questions. From the table it can be seen that the responses vary to some extent.

4.1.22 Lexical Items

In structured situation a test was developed to see the competence of the children on lexical items over various domains of life. Table 22, shows the scores of children on lexical items. The comprehension task was scored on a 2 point scale. The production task was scored on a 4 point scale.

The result show that the children are familiar with most of the lexical items. The wrong responses in comprehension and production range from 10% to 36.66% and 2.3% to 23.2% respectively. In production task it can be seen that the children are familiar with the standard forms to a great extent.

4.2 Observations Regarding the Language Acquisition Patterns of Primary Entrants

Table 23 shows the language status of the students. Analysis shows that the children have acquired almost all the morphological and syntactical categories. Among the sentence patterns, the children have acquired simple sentences and complex sentences. But they have not uttered compound sentences. This can be due to the fact that in Malayalam the tendency is to utter elliptical sentences in communicative language. Moreover, Malayalam has got copula verb also. Thus, less usage of compound

sentences in spoken language by children can be due to this. They may be less familiar with the forms and consequently they do not utter such sentences. However, in comprehension task compound sentence structures were included and few children have answered it appropriately. From this it can be concluded that although the children do not utter compound sentences when they talk they are in the initial stages of acquisition. The result of imitation task also confirms this.

Among simple sentences the different modal notions are familiar to the children with regard to imperative mood although the percentage is less in elicited speech, it is very high in playful speech. In other modal notions also the disparity in percentage is there. This can be due to the fact that the different contexts and the usages vary extensively. However the percentages of prohibitive is also expressed by a lexical item. Children may be more familiar with that form. Another interesting feature that throws light on the acquisition of language is that although in Malayalam, modal notions have many stylistic variations, children have acquired only one or two forms. The children have not acquired all the different semantic shades.

Analysis shows that children have acquired transformation like negation. They are competent enough in interrogation and pseudointerrogation.

4.3 In Depth Study:

The language of the school differs from the language at home (Wells 1984). The language of the school can be language of the teacher as well as of the students. Therefore, in order to obtain a clear understanding of the child language, the language of the child at home has to be observed and analysed.

From among the thirty children of the sample, ten were selected to be observed at home environment. Children's interaction with parents and siblings were tape-recorded and transcribed.

The Table 2~~4~~ shows the acquisition patterns of ten children with regard to their mother tongue at home environment. The data confirms the conclusions made in the observations of the speech at class room setting. The morphological acquisition pattern of ^{morphological} ~~morphological~~ categories and syntactical structures are very similar. But at home environment the children rarely uttered aspectual and modal notions. They tended to utter more elliptical sentences and answered through gestures and certain sounds. This can be due to the fact that the speech was more spontaneous and free at home all the categories seen in school setting seen in home environment also. The acquisition of ~~one~~ category was confirmed on the basis of presence or absence in one context at least.

4.4 Language Status

The observations made clearly indicate that when the child enters the first standard he would have acquired mastery over morphological categories and basic syntactical structures of his mother tongue. Even his vocabulary is not low. Therefore, while framing the curriculum that the linguistic capacities of children should be taken care of and language education should synchronize with their competence and defecits. Good writing is based on fluent and correct speaking and every language teacher should be aware of developing correct communication ability of the children at an young age itself.

The study reveals that the childrens knowledge about lexical items are very good. Except for 3 children all others have scored more than 75% in production. So is the case with comprehension. Among them only two children have maintained 70% in both production and comprehension. This leads to the conclusion that when the child enters the school he brings to his chool years a rather large variety of concepts at least as represented by a large vocabulary.

Words alone do not bring any meaning in a language and language becomes meaningful only when words and morphemes and inflections are combined together to form different clases like

nouns, adjectives, tenses, post-positions, cases etc. The study reveals that a child who enters the class has already mastered the morphological categories. Not only that they have comprehended the concept plurality or tenses or cases but also acquired the morphological category and even allomorphs. In the case of tense marking they have acquired all the morphophonemic changes. Over generalisation was very less. It was same with cases also although some case markings have more than one suffix. Regarding adjectives the children have difficulties in using specific form. This is a gap that has to be taken care of. In reflexive pronouns the acquisition percentage is less. Many a time instead of using the reflexive pronouns the children use their own names. So the usage of reflexive pronouns become less. Other pronouns are well acquired. Wh-questions are also comprehended well. But all the affirmation forms are not being acquired. The children have used the forms correctly. When they have to use the form *ade* some have used *uvvu*. This is another gap in the morphological acquisition. But in negation the children do not commit such mistakes. Interrogative forms are profusely used in the playful situation which lead to the conclusion that it has been well acquired. In verb types transitive verbs and intransitive verbs have been acquired but not causative verbs. This is the least acquired morphological category. Even auxiliary verbs have been acquired by children.

When it comes to syntactical categories the considerations are word order, sentence types and relationship between sentences. When questions are put to children they tend to answer in elliptical sentences. But the word order is known to them. This conclusion is reached from the production of embedded sentences. In the structured test (Table 17B) the comprehension percentage is very high. Even in the production test the percentage is 96.66 and 83.33 for two items. However, in playful situation they have not used embedded sentences profusely. From this the inference we can have is that the children have already acquired the notion of word order and embedding but have not started expressing it. This can be further elaborated by looking into their patterns of sentence productions. Children have scored relatively less in expression of sentences. Very few children have uttered different sentence types. Children are able to use conjunctions and disjunctions (Table 18) but not other forms. Since the criterion used in asserting the acquisition of a language form is the presence in one single instance, it can be concluded that children have already acquired the understanding of different sentence types although they have not expressed it. The word order in Malayalam is subject, object verb. Sentence always ends with a verb type. The verb itself is such that a mode of expression itself can differentiate the meaning and give different sense. For example, if the verb see is expressed as kandu, it is a verb but if it is used as kanda the sense is

totally different and sentence pattern itself gets changed. From the utterances of children it can be concluded that many children have yet to understand the differences in these expressions which is very crucial in language use.

In the early phase, language is a means to satisfy the immediate physiological needs and wants. But as he matures this relation may become increasingly indirect in pace with his growing curiosity and when he starts going to school a normal child starts an intense use of language to explore relations with people and things . So the effective role of language should be developed into a cognitive one. From the analysis it is inferred that the child by the time he arrives at school has learned to speak whatever sound system, grammar and vocabulary i.e. characteristic of his mother-tongue which he has heard most frequently at home. Based on these acquired capabilities teacher should alter up a system of habits which are not highly practiced but which also probably may serve a supportive roling child adjustments to the non-school environment.

When we look into the acquisition of modal and aspectual notions the percentage of acquisition varies to a great extent. Regarding moods it can be said that the children have acquired the the notion of different moods. Except for a prohibitive mood where the percentage is as low as 3.33% (elicit speech) and 16.66% (playful speech) all other moods have rather high

percentage either in elicited speech or in playful situation which leads to conclude that children can differentiate the notion of different moods. But when it comes to aspectual notion the percentage is rather low. The children have yet to comprehend and produce aspectual notion in a proper way.

The lapses in the production ability of the children can be further illustrated by children's utterances in story comprehension task and imitation task. In story comprehension where the children have to use aspectual notions and modal notions the percentage is not very high. In imitation task where the children were given sentences of different length and complexity they could not reproduce the varied sentence in many cases. Only up to the 4th sentence where only one idea and one grammatical peculiarity is included the children could reproduce appropriately. From this it can be concluded that the length of utterance depends not only on the number of units but also on the complexity. This can be reason of children's less production of complex and compound sentences with varied aspectual and modal notions.

4.5 Language and its Correlates

From the study it is concluded that all the children are competent equally in their speech behavior. Considering the

linguistic aspects a child is supposed to acquire at the age of five, three stages of language acquisition are formulated. The speech behavior of each child is analysed and status of each child is determined. Table 23 shows the stage of language acquisition of 30 children observed.

The variations in the language status may be due to many reasons and can have varied effects. Verbalization can aid learning concepts (Hughes 1984). The language ability can be a key to social success even at first grade level (Slobin 1978). From the study it is evident that the child as he enters the school is competent enough in vocabulary and syntax although the expressive ability is not the same. No child is in the category low means they all have the minimum required knowledge about their mother-tongue. The variations are mainly due to the usage of aspectual and modal notions and production of sentence patterns. This use of language in limited situations may be due to many reasons which needs more attention and exploration because it is usually at the early school years that the child learns to use language more technically. Recent researches have shown interest in studying the language behavior of children in the class-room (Green & Wallat, 1981; Mehan 1979). Researches on sub-cultural and developmental differences are of potentially great significance for instructional materials and procedures in reading and language arts particularly as they relate to the education of children from linguistically and diverse

environments. The study of language in schooling is many sided (Young, Arnold & Watson 1986). Language is both an educational medium and a competence for the learner which is itself one of the goals of education. It is used to maintain or change relationships between people and to express and affect feelings, especially the way a person feels about the content of what is being said and the people they are speaking to. Therefore, the study of language in formal education has to be taken in such a way that it is the study of language roles. This is particularly important at the primary classes. When a child enters the school the language education should not give the child a tension. The teacher student interaction and the dialogue with the teacher should not be an imposition of acceptable ways of expression and feelings. The teacher should not consistently evaluate the pupils language in terms of correctness according to a particular view of correct language which all the people may not share. If it is so many pupils may feel a sense of cultural deprivation or stigmatization.

Variations in the speech behavior is evident in every state. Even in a small state like Kerala regional variations in the language is so much that it is difficult for a person from south Kerala to understand fully the language of a northern Keralite (Mangad Balakrishnan 1988). The study reveals that even in the classroom the variations in speech behavior is experienced and that too not in the acquisition of basic structures of the

language but in its appropriate usage. Therefore, the first and foremost duty of the mother tongue teacher is to help the child in acquiring the verbalisation which helps to acquire the standard language enabling him to meet the challenges of education.

4.5.1 Language and Logical Reasoning Ability

It has to be seen that the language status of the child is related to the cognitive development. At each level a child can perform certain tasks like the difference in the acquisition of various linguistic categories because language development is an index of general level of cognitive functioning of child. This is the second objective of the study.

Three Piagetian tasks were given for assessing the logical reasoning ability of the children (Appendix-13, Chapter-III).

The hypothesis is as follows;

- There is no correlation between language status and logical reasoning ability.

- Language status of the children are determined (Table 23). According to the performance of the piagtion tasks three levels of logical reasoning are determined (Table 25). The relationship between language status and logical reasoning ability is seen by Chi-square method.

The details are given hereunder:

		High	Middle	Low	Total
Language Status	High	01	14	04	19
	Middle	00	08	03	11
	Total	1	22	07	30

Chi-square value = 2.667

df = 2

The Chi-square is not significant. Hence we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no relationship between language status and logical reasoning ability.

4.5.2 Language and Social Factors

Language development does not depend only on the innateness of the child. Researches have described language development as a means to encode his knowledge about the world around him for the purposes of interaction. The language he speaks is the kind of language he has heard most frequently at home. The kind of environment that every child experiences will be different. The third objective of the study is to see relationship between language status and social factors.

Language and Economic Status

It has to be seen whether the language status of the child is related to Economic status. The economic status of the child is determined from the bio-data of the children collected by the Investigator (Table 26).

The hypothesis is put as follows:

There is no relationship between language status and economic status of the child.

		<u>Economic Status</u>			
Language status		H	M	L	
H		7	10	2	19
M		0	4	7	11
		7	14	9	30

Chi-square value is = 8.805
df = 2

Chi-square value is significant. So null hypothesis is rejected showing that there is relationship between language status and economic status of the child.

Language Status and Parental Working Status

Researches have shown that the quality of a child's interchange is likely to effect a child's ability or readiness to use language later (Wells 1982; Tizard and Hughes 1984). Interaction with people triggers language development in children. When the social system changed with joint families giving way to nuclear families, it influence the development of children in many ways. In nuclear families if both parents are working, the child is left either with the servant or in a day care centre. Attempt has been made to see whether the working status of the parents has any influence on the language development of the child. Hypothesis is put up as follows:

There is no relationship between language status of the child and parental working status.

Details of the analysis is as follows:

	H	M	Total
Both working	7	12	19
Only one working	2	9	11
	9	21	30

Chi-square value = 1.155

df = 1

Value is not significant. Hence we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no relation between language status of the child and parental working status.

Language Status and Position of Child in the Family

Language development of the child with siblings and without siblings has been studied. If it is an only child, the parents interact more with the child and he is exposed to more adult speech. But he has siblings the interaction will be more with the siblings and child talk. It has been tried to see whether the exposure of adult language has any influence on the language development of the child. The position of the child is determined from Appendix 11, Chapter-III.

The hypothesis is put as follows:

There is no relationship between language status and position of child in the family.

Details of the analysis are given below:

Language Status

	H	M	
Without siblings	03	00	03
With siblings	16	11	27
Total	19	11	30

Chi-square value = 1.9298

df = 1

Value is not significant. So null hypothesis is accepted concluding that there is no relationship between language status and position of child in the family.

Language Status and Pre-primary Education

In any formal setting, some teaching is sure to take place. So if a child has attend the pre-primary class he is sure to have

undergone some formal training. But whether it has the influence on language acquisition is to be seen.

The hypothesis is put as follows:

Pre-primary education has no influence on the language status of the child.

Details of the analysis is as follows:

	H	M	Total
With pre-primary	19	0	19
Without pre-primary	17	4	21
	26	4	30

Chi-square value = 4.1758

df = 1

Value is significant at 0.05 level. So null hypothesis is rejected concluding that there is a relationship between language status of the child and pre-primary education.

Thus from the analysis the following conclusions are made:

- i) Language status is not related to logical reasoning.

- ii) Language status is related to economic status.
- iii) Language status is not related to parental working status.
- iv) Language status is not related to the position of child in the family.
- v) Language status is related to pre-primary education.

4.6 Discussion

The analysis of the data indicates that the children when they enter first standard have mastered the basic structures of language. They have acquired all the morphological categories and basic syntactic categories. They are yet to acquire various aspects and moods. While analyzing the acquisition pattern of aspects and moods, it can be seen that the children are not in a position to utter those aspects appropriately. Many children who have used accusitive case marker in an improper way have acquired the markers but cannot use them properly due to reasons other than linguistic. Other reasons can be psychological or socio-cultural. Piagttian theory suggests that a child can acquire language structures only if the cognitive structures can accommodate the same. According to Knenne language development is normally a very good index of the cognitive functioning of the child. So some have acquired syntactical categories and they lag behind in some morphological categories. Reasons may be socio-cultural. It can be due to economic status or some other cultural deficits. The language the child speaks will be the language he

has heard most frequently at home. While going through the wrong responses committed by children it can be seen that if the living conditions are poor the language they use at home will be very much deviant from standard language. So while entering the school, the language of the teacher gives a tension to the child and may lead to stigmatization. So care must be taken to see the deficits of the language of a child coming from economically and culturally deprived conditions from standard language. Experiences indicate that spoken language should run ahead of written form. At least in the primary grades the child should learn language patterns of standard language before they are influenced to the printed form. So experiences should be provided for the children to use the correct linguistic category in the proper context. It is not the linguistic categories that has to be made familiar with but the language use in context. Otherwise it can create barriers to learning. The child needs plentiful opportunities for practice in speaking and understanding the language in different contexts. If the teacher depends too much on the standard language in teaching it brings about a gulf between teacher and taught. (Barnes 1986). Moreover if the teacher consistently evaluates a student's language in terms of its correctness the pupils do not necessarily share their experiences and can feel rejected.

4.7 Implications for Mother-tongue Teaching at Primary Level

In this section, the text book of the first standard is evaluated in the light of the observations of the present study and improvements are suggested on its basis.

The study of language in schooling contexts is many sided. Actually the study of teaching and learning from the stand point of language involves a double perspective. Language is both an educatinal medium and a competence for the learner which it-self is one of the goals of education. In both perspectives the language is no static but is capable of engendering changes in other people in coordination with their cooperative ability. Language can also be used to maintain or change relationships between people and to express and affect feelings. Thus the study of language in education is the study of language roles also. Actually the quality of education is affected by the cognitive and effective quality of communicative relationships, which is the major medium of schooling. In this sense, the structure of curriculum tasks given improtance place in the interaction must be seen as a major source of opportunitites for cognitive and communicative development.

In Kerala State Institute of Education has developed a new approach in teaching mother tongue at first standard students as a part of their programme to improve the text books in all standards. This has been introduced in the academic year 1985-86. The learning experiences in mother tongue has been included in three parts namely Ale khana paricayan, Sabhashana panicayam and kerala padvali . An attempt is made to evaluate the text book on the basis of the observations made in the study.

In the present Indian context text book is the main tool for imparting education. Majority of the children do not have the financial capacity to buy work books and supplementary books which will help a lot in learning. So while planning the curriculum the text book should be given great importance since it will suffice to a great extent the conducting of teaching - learning situation. "Though text books are simply means not an end in themselves their importance cannot be minimized. Good text books, planned with care are sure to do full justice to educate the children and change the destiny of the people and the country. (Preparation and Evaluation of text books in Mother tongue - Principles and Procedures - NCERT publication 1970)".

The content in mother tongue should be selected with much

care. The teaching programme in mother tongue should enable the students to acquire the competence in mother tongue which may help them in conducting dairy life, getting formal education and participating in social and cultural life. For this the linguistic context, additional context and different forms and formats of expression should be integrated which will enable the child to express himself. This is the basic difference between mother tongue instruction and instruction of other subjects. While in all other subjects when the content becomes most important in mother tongue apart from the content listening and reading comprehension and oral and written expressions become most important while selecting the context the above mentioned aspects should be kept in mind.

The important consideration while organizing the text book are selection, gradation and presentation of the content. By gradation it is meant that the content selected should be suitable for that particular grade gradation should also aim at developing the linguistic abilities of the children and giving them formal training in these abilities. It should also make language education convenient and sequential. For this it should take into consideration the expected instructional objectives, changing interests and mental maturity of the learner. The selected content gradation should be with respect to unfamiliarity, complexity and changing interests and level of mental maturity of the learner. Presentation is another

important factor. In primary classes the presentation should be very careful. The presentation should correspond to the reading interests and mental maturity while preparing a text book these considerations are to be taken into account. As far as a text book is concerned, the difficulty level, potentiality to achieve instructional objectives and suitability to the interest and mental maturity of the learner are important. This is applicable for any mother tongue text book. More than this the instructional objectives at each standard also should be considered.

Language is a social bond as well as a medium of communication. It should be learned by talking since language is primarily speech. Speech is also handling instrument than writing for quick practice and repetition care can write correctly only if he can speak correctly and fluently because only through correct speech he can correct sentences without reflection out of the store of patterns which he has collected in his mind in prolonged and attentive listening. This emphasized the primacy of speech and need to foster communicative ability in the learning process. Many a time this is always neglected. Unreflexive use of teaching and learning fail to recognise that communicative competence is an essential pre-requisite of effective learning in the wide variety of learning contexts in later life, particularly those outside formal schooling situation. The development of this competence is not independent of opportunities for its development and exercises provided in the

communication structures of class-rooms themselves (Young Arnond and Wardson). Considering this attempt of SIE to give importance to communication in the first standard deserves appreciation.

In the first standard a second part namely Sambhashana parichayam has been included. Considering the importance of communication in teaching-learning situations. It is meant that the child should get familiar with new words and sentence patterns and pronunciation should get refined in natural and spontaneous situations. As far as possible all spoken and written composition should be functional and be directed towards the needs of community, class and school. Talking in class should be cooperative team work in speech and along the same lines. The material for language lesson is not language but life itself, the language is the instrument - one use to deal with the material, slices of experience.

With the considerations, the text book for first standard is evaluated. The very idea of giving importance to communication ability in mother tongue teaching is a good example set forth. Many a time mother tongue education is equated with learning alphabets and teaching learning situations become mere practicing place for orthography. Instead of that in Kerala, children are given an opportunity to improve their communicative competence.

It has to be carefully examined how far the book has

achieved the objectives set forth. The objectives of the book is to enable the child to speak in standard language thereby making him easy to write correct language. Children always talk in elliptical sentences and they should be trained to use complete sentences.

Study reveals that children when they enter the first standard have mastered all the basic syntactic structures of language. In such a situation the book meant to promote the communication ability of the children. If the same structures they know are included child will not find any newness in it but what is more important is that the child should be made to experience the intricacies of the language. He should live in it not merely understand it. Hence varied contexts should be provided for the child where he can use different syntactical structures of the language he speaks. This has not been taken care of in preparing the present text book. This first two parts are meant to be finished before first term and in the second term the third part Kerala padavali - is supposed to start. Complete demarkation is not essential. Child has mastered the basic syntactic structures so the first part and the third part is to initiate the child to orthography through strokes. While that is finished the child can be made to familiarize with the alphabets. The second part is meant not only to improve communicative competence but also to initiate environmental studies. So this part need not be over before the first term. The child should be

introduced into experiences he is familiar with and he made to develop slowly the social awareness and basic scientific knowledge.

An analysis of the second part (Sambhashana Parichayam) reveals that the organisation of the learning experiences do not help either to a great extent in developing linguistic complexities and social and scientific awareness. The child enjoys learning a language when he experiences newness in it. A child when he enters school has mastered basic syntactic structures. So while considering the linguistic part, it should be borne in mind that the learning experiences should take care to acquire those aspects of the language where the children are deficit. But in the present textbook the learning experiences are given in such a way that it becomes mere learning of lexical items. The interesting feature is that the vocabulary of a child when he enters the first standard is very rich. So mere inclusion of items which the child has already mastered makes learning monotonous and uninteresting.

Another important aspect that has to be considered, while preparing the learning material for communicative competence in mother tongue, is not to neglect the sociocultural diversities of the learner. Although in the preface mention has been made regarding the regional variations of words, no mention has been made regarding the sociocultural diversities. The variation in

the speech behavior ~~is~~ to a large extent is due to the economic, social and cultural diversities. When the speech behavior is analyzed the interesting feature ~~was~~ the language used by some children, deviant from standard language. It is not that the child has not acquired the linguistic categories but that he does not use it appropriately. For example the case markers are after used in an improper manner although all the markers are familiar for hi. So also affirmation forms. Since children have started acquiring aspectual and modal notions, he should be practiced to use the right form in right context. This need is felt when the usage of imperative mood was analysed. Very few children have used the right mood at the right context. The interaction at home are varied and the proper usage must not have taken care of. So they continue to use the inappropriate forms. In a formal instructional system, when the communicative competence is enriching these factors have to be taken care of. Child should be given learning experiences to talk in different context to different people so that the child will be able to learn the language according to the need of the context. Such experiences are not provided in the book.

The book is meant also to initiate the children to environmental studies. The experiences can be started with talking about one self. Self and the surroundings will be a better way to start environmental studies. Talking about self, then body parts, home, routine life, food, vegetables, plants

parts of plant, cleanliness, school experiences in school transport, festivals, cultural aspects etc. can be the way of presentation. In the book the experiences are mixed up in such a way that the sequence of communication is confusing to the child. The learning experiences start with home. The things that are used at home are given much later just after birds and animals. That unit is followed by Kathakali a classical dance form of Kerala. Just after this cultural aspect some objects the children use are again given followed by informations regarding postal services. Then comes transport followed by body parts. This is just to highlight that selection, gradation and presentation of the content which is very important to mother tongue teaching are not very well taken care of while organizing this part. To develop environmental awareness inter-related aspects should be organised in a sequential manner. To prove linguistic abilities, child should be given opportunities to use those aspects which he has to acquire rather than to repeat the aspects which he has already mastered. This only will make mother tongue instruction efficient and attractive.

Another important aspect that has to be considered while preparing the learning material for communicative competence in mother-tongue, is not to neglect the socio-cultural diversities of the learner. Language teaching at primary level is not merely a process of teaching new habits and skills but often a process of changing habits. Although if the preface mentioned has been

made regarding the regional variations of words no mention has been made regarding the socio-cultural diversities. The variation in the speech behavior is to a large extent due to economic, social and cultural diversities. When the speech behavior is analysed the interesting feature observed is that the language used by some children are very deviant standard language. It is not that the child has not acquired the linguistic categories but he does not know how to use it appropriately. For example the case markers are often used in a improper manner although all the markers are familiar for him. Same is the case with affirmation forms. Since children have started acquiring aspectual and modal notions, they should be given practice to use the right form in the right context. This need is felt more when the usage of imperative mood is analysed. Very few children have used the right mood in the right context. The interactions at home are varied and proper usage must not have been taken care of at home. So they continue to use the inappropriate forms. In a formal instruction system, when the communicative competence is enriching these practice have to be taken care of. This can be done by a process of giving as many pertinent experiences as possible and establishing learning conditions which will allow the child to see the relevant distinctions in meaning and differential classification of concepts.

Margaret J. Early 1967 has suggested that in the first stage of appreciating literary forms the enjoyment will be unconscious.

In this stage, pleasure should come without struggle. Unusual combination of words a sense of rhyme and rhythm and humour bringing pleasure. Meanings do not matter at this stage. So when including small poems for children these aspects should be taken care of. But poems included in the text book of first standard do not reflect these aspects much.

From a practical point of view, language is a public system of symbols, agreed upon by common usage and speech refers to an individual's use of language. But the language a person uses has many functions and even one utterance may have more than one use. The teachers at primary level do need recognise a whole range of usage and given children opportunities in this whole range of areas. At the stage of early childhood, the children are constantly extending their knowledge of the world and being stretched intellectually by talking, arguing and asking endless questions. The school's task is to build-on this early intellectual achievement by providing more time to extend children's general knowledge and verbal explanation of their environment. Domestic type of questions are useful starting points but it should never end up in repeatation of lexical items only. Pressure should be exerted on the children to use the latent resources and provide experiences which urge them towards widest range of language use.