CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

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1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE PROBLEM

"To read is to fly: it is to soar to a point of vantage which gives a view over wide terrains of history, human variety, ideas, shared experience and the fruits of many inquiries."

Prof. A. C. Grayling

Language is unique to humans in the extent to which it is developed and used to aid thinking and all manner of communicating. In the first few years of life, we create a language that we can use from our daily contacts with others in our home and local environment. Between ages three and five, even children with rather dramatic handicaps acquire the basis of language. Accounts of early language learning vary but always depict the child as an active, natural language learner who typically progresses from uttering a word, around the ninth month, to two word utterances at about eighteen months and then goes on to acquire all the basic sentence forms as early as two years and six months of age.

Thus, before entering school most children have a well-developed unconscious knowledge of the formal grammar. This knowledge includes the sound system, the rules for ordering words into phrases and sentences, and the storage of concepts of many words. This and other types of language knowledge serve the child’s needs to produce speech and inner language. This knowledge assists thinking and enables the child to achieve the objective of communication and understand the speech of others.

Language mediates most of the aspects of the daily life of the child, who becomes subconsciously aware of how it functions in the widening circle of the child’s personal and social life. With age and schooling, children show increasing overt awareness of language (Clark, 1979). There is an intense natural motivation to learn to speak language, and to explore its
functions. This pattern will continue as the individual continues to acquire, organize, and restructure knowledge of the world.

Halliday (1975) identifies seven functions that language has for children in their early years. Children are motivated to acquire language because it serves certain purposes or functions for them. The first four functions help the child to satisfy physical, emotional and social needs. Halliday calls them instrumental, regulatory, interactional, and personal functions. The next three functions are heuristic, imaginative, and representational, all of which help the child to come to terms with his/her environment.

- **Instrumental function**: This is when language is used to express needs (e.g. ‘Want juice’).
- **Regulatory function**: This is where language is used to tell others what to do (e.g. 'Go away').
- **Interactional function**: Here, language is used to make contact with others and form relationships (e.g. 'Love you, mummy').
- **Personal function**: This is the use of language to express feelings, opinions, and individual identity (e.g. 'Me good girl').
- **Heuristic function**: This is when language is used to gain knowledge about the environment (e.g. 'What the tractor doing?').
- **Imaginative function**: Here language is used to tell stories and jokes, and to create an imaginary environment (e.g. ‘Let’s pretend’).
- **Informative function**: (Representational) Here, language is used to convey facts and information (e.g. ‘I’ve got something to tell you’).

According to Halliday, as the child moves into the mother tongue, these functions give way to the generalized "metafunctions" of language. In this process, in between the two levels of the simple protolanguage system, an additional level of content is inserted. Instead of one level of content, there
are now two: lexicogrammar and semantics. The "expression" plane also now consists of two levels: phonetics and phonology.

When language is used for all these purposes, the child must first see how it can be used for each individually. The child must also have the opportunity to have each use moulded and then to personally explore each use individually.

The Reading Experience

Reading acquisition is different from language acquisition in perhaps only three senses. First, to discover that print is language, the reader must transform the printed code into language. Second, the sources of motivation underlying language acquisition are intense and natural, whereas those underlying reading depend on the conditions through which children become acquainted with print and the conditions that determine its functions in the child’s personal, social and academic pursuits. Third, the interaction between speaker and listener always occurs in a rich pragmatic context. The non-verbal actions of the speaker and the immediate surroundings offer the receiver access to immediate clarification of utterances.

Initial experiences with reading are built upon children’s desire to imagine, to know things, and to explore the world. Opportunity for these experiences should always be available as new dimensions of reading for learning are introduced. The easiest ways to begin children’s acquaintance with reading and its uses is by reading to them and talking to them about books (Holdaway, 1979). The next step is to model the print being read so that children can see it and hear it transformed. These experiences should continue as children are taught how to break the code, how to identify words, and how words are ordered to make sentences on the page. As the overt knowledge of language grows and the ability to read words fluently
increases, children will be able to spend more time reading by themselves and exploring the personal, social and academic uses of reading. In short, language learning is built on the fundamental knowledge of how language works and functions. This knowledge must be related to the activity of reading during each stage of reading acquisition in the manner by which children are introduced to print and aided to develop as readers.

Children who become effective readers are taught by teachers who enjoy and respect children, who value reading, and who are willing to take the initiative in devising better ways to help children read. The teacher is the most important influence on the elementary school child’s course of reading development. In schools where reading instruction is effectively imparted, teachers must acquire, integrate, and implement specific knowledge about both the nature of reading and the ways of teaching children to read.

Reading begins naturally for some children before their formal schooling begins. Others acquire their first experiences with books in schools. All are expected to grow dramatically as readers, if for no other reason than to meet the demands that formal schooling places on children today. These expectations are indeed formidable.

**The Reading Process**

Reading is a complex cognitive process of decoding symbols for the intention of deriving meaning and/or constructing meaning. Reading is a transitive process in which readers negotiate meaning or interpretation. During reading, the meaning does not go from the page to the reader; instead, it is a complex negotiation between the text and the reader that is shaped by the immediate situational context and broader socio-linguistic context (Weaver, 1988). The immediate situational context includes the reader’s knowledge about the topic, the reader’s purpose for reading, and
other factors related to the situation. Broader socio-linguistic contexts include the language community that the reader belongs to, the language used in the text, and the reader’s expectations about reading based on previous experiences. This description of the reading process is presented schematically in Figure 1.1

![Figure 1.1](image)

**Figure 1.1**  
**The Reading Process**

Reading is a means of language acquisition, of communication, and of sharing information and ideas. Reading by humans is mostly done from paper with ink: a book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or notebook. Handwritten text may also consist of graphite from a pencil. More recently, text is read from computer displays, television, and other displays, such as mobile phones or e-readers. Short texts may be written or painted on an object.

It is advisable to indulge in at least half an hour of reading a day to keep abreast of the various styles of writing and new vocabulary. It is observed that children and teenagers who love reading have comparatively higher IQs. They are more creative and do better in school and college. It is
recommended that parents to inculcate the importance of reading to their children in the early years. Reading is said to significantly help in developing vocabulary, and reading aloud helps to build a strong emotional bond between parents and children. The children who start reading from an early age are observed to have good language skills, and they grasp the variances in phonics much better.

Reading helps in mental development and is known to stimulate the muscles of the eyes. Reading is an activity that involves greater levels of concentration and adds to the conversational skills of the reader. It is an indulgence that enhances the knowledge acquired consistently. The habit of reading also helps readers to decipher new words and phrases that they come across in everyday conversations. The habit can become a healthy addiction and adds to the information available on various topics. It helps us to stay in touch with contemporary writers as well as those from the days of lore and makes us sensitive to global issues.

Reading is essentially a thought process. The relationship of reading to thought was noted by Thorndike as early as in 1917. Reading is a process of getting meaning from word symbols. It is more than a mechanical process, even though mechanics are an essential part of the process.

The literature on reading yields a variety of statements such as: reading is primarily a visual task; reading is recognition of words; reading is reproducing; reading is a thinking process; reading is a step to personal development; and the like. Keeping these in view, Strang et al. (1961) rightly remark:

> If we think of reading primarily as a visual task, we will be concerned with the correction of visual defects and the provision of legible reading materials. If we think of reading as word recognition, we will drill on the basic sight vocabulary and
word recognition skills. If we think of reading as merely reproducing, we will direct the student’s attention to the literal meaning of the passage and check his comprehension of it. If we think of reading as a thinking process, we shall be concerned with the reader’s skill in making interpretations, and generalizations, in drawing inferences and conclusion. If we think of reading as contributing to personal development and effecting desirable personality changes, we will provide our students with reading materials that meet their needs or have some applications to their lives.

Reading is a group of skills which involves word recognition skills, vocabulary, reading for total meaning, reading for central thought, comprehending specific, factual information, following directions and assimilation. No one reads at one time for total meaning, at another time for vocabulary and at another time for comprehending the specific factual information. All these skills play their roles simultaneously - maybe, the extent of their participation varies according to the different subject-matter.

**Reading - A Skill and An Art**

Reading Skills enable readers to turn writing into meaning and achieve the goals of independence, comprehension, and fluency.

Reading Skills are specific abilities which enable a reader

- to read the written form as meaningful language.
- to read anything written with independence, comprehension and fluency.
- to mentally interact with the message.

Reading is a complex art requiring the coordination of many skills. It involves mechanical skill requiring dexterity and speed; comprehension and usually skills of interpretation. It is an act of creation, for the reader pursues a line of thought previously worked out by the writer and set down
in a pattern designed to reveal the relationship of ideas. This pattern of writing is determined by organization of material and by a more subtle thing which is inherent in the individual mind of the writer. Reading requires a mental adjustment of these patterns or modes of expression. The competent reader, who reads in many fields, thinks in many patterns and with many minds. Failure in this makes reading hard and perplexing.

The National Committee on Reading (1925) in its first report described five stages in reading instruction. The first stage is reading readiness; the second, the initial stage in reading is learning to read; the third stage is one of rapid progress in fundamental reading attitudes and habits, and includes the instructional programme of the second and third grades. Training in the techniques of word analysis and word recognition needs to be given throughout this period.

During the fourth, fifth and sixth grades which constitute the fourth stage in reading instruction, the normal reading programme should include wide reading that extends and enriches the child’s experience. The basic skills in word recognition and comprehension, acquired in the primary grades, are necessary to get continued attention to the improvement of those skills in the middle grades. Silent reading should become much faster than oral reading and should occupy most of the time spent on reading instruction. Special attention needs to be devoted to the skills that are involved in the reading of factual materials.

Sixth grade reading ability is sufficient for most of the general reading done by adults. A determined effort should therefore be made in the sixth grade to bring as many pupils as possible up to the seventh grade level in reading ability. The fifth stage includes the secondary school and college period. Study skills are given importance in this stage.
Reading Purpose

Reading is an activity with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge, or in order to critique a writer's ideas or writing style. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read. The purpose for teaching also determines the appropriate approach to teaching comprehension. A person teaching poetry for enjoyment needs to recognize the words the poet uses and the ways they are put together. However, a person using a scientific article to support an opinion needs to know the vocabulary that is used, understands the facts and cause-effect sequences that are presented, and recognizes ideas that are presented as hypotheses. Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The text presents letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills, and strategies to determine what that meaning is.

Reader knowledge, skills, and strategies include:

- Linguistic competence: the ability to recognize the elements of the writing system; knowledge of vocabulary; knowledge of how words are structured into sentences
- Discourse competence: knowledge of discourse markers and how they connect parts of the text to one another
- Sociolinguistic competence: knowledge about different types of texts and their usual structure and content
- Strategic competence: the ability to use top-down strategies as well as bottom-up strategies

The purposes for reading and the type of text determine the specific knowledge, skills, and strategies that readers need to apply to achieve comprehension. Reading comprehension is thus much more than decoding. Reading comprehension results when the reader knows which skills and
strategies are appropriate for the type of text, and understand how to apply them to accomplish the reading purpose.

**Types of Reading**
We read in different ways, depending on the purpose for which we are reading a text. The various types of reading are:

- **Skimming** - may be defined as "looking over a text/book quickly, in order to get a general or superficial idea of the content".

- **Scanning** - is careful reading to find out the specific and clear details.

- **Extensive Reading** - is when one reads for the pure pleasure of reading.

- **Intensive Reading** - is reading slowly with a lot of concentration.

- **Loud and Silent Reading** - When somebody reads aloud, the concentration is divided between reading and speaking. There are situations when one may have to read things aloud because others do not have access to them. The natural way of reading is silent reading, which is ideal and helps comprehension.

- **SQ3R Technique of Reading** – was developed by *Robinson (1970)* in the book "Effective Study". It stands for the initial letters of the five steps in studying a text, viz. Survey(S), Question (Q), Read (R), Recall (R), and Review (R).

- **Independent Reading** - is silent reading and is self-paced (*Taylor, 1993*). The selections for reading must be at students' reading level in order for them to comprehend what they are reading.

- **Reading Aloud to Students** - by teachers using the interactive read-aloud procedure to share selections that are appropriate for students' interest level but too difficult for them to read by themselves (*Barrentine, 1996*).
Guided Reading - helps teachers scaffold students' reading to teach reading strategies (Fountas and Pinnell, 1996, 2001). Guided reading is conducted with small groups of students who read at the same level.

Shared Reading - enables students to follow along as the teacher reads a selection aloud (Fisher and Medvic, 2000). Primary-grade teachers often use big books - enlarged versions of the selection - for shared reading (Holdaway, 1979).

Reading Strategies

Good reading strategies help us to read in a very efficient way. It aims to get the maximum benefit from reading with the minimum effort. This section shows six different strategies and techniques that can be used to read more effectively. They are:

- Knowing what to know and reading appropriately
- Knowing how deeply to read the document: skimming, scanning or studying
- Using active reading techniques to pick out key points and keep the mind focused on the material
- Using the table of contents for reading magazines and newspapers, and clipping useful articles
- Understanding how to extract information from different article types
- Creating own table of contents for reviewing material
- Using indexes, tables of contents, and glossaries to help assimilate technical information.

Reading Comprehension

Reading Comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of the written material. Proficient reading depends on the ability to recognize words quickly and effortlessly. If word recognition is difficult, students use
too much of their processing capacity to read individual words, which interferes with their ability to comprehend what is read.

During the last century, comprehension lessons usually comprised students answering teachers' questions, writing responses to questions on their own, or both. The whole group version of this practice also often included "round robin reading" where, teachers called on individual students to read a portion of the text. Instead of using the prior read-test method, research studies have concluded that there are much more effective ways to teach comprehension. Much work has been done in the area of teaching novice readers a bank of “reading strategies,” or tools to interpret and analyze text.

Instruction in comprehension strategy use often involves the gradual release of responsibility, wherein teachers initially explain and model strategies. Over time, they give students more and more responsibility for using the strategies until they can use them independently. This technique is generally associated with the idea of self-regulation and reflects social cognitive theory, originally conceptualized by Bandura (1991).

**Reading Habit**

Effective reading is the most important avenue of effective learning. Reading is not just about printed matter, but about the ability to interpret anything that is intended to convey a message or that which is to enable communication. One of the most important factors in Education is ability to read, understand and critically apprehend the text (Hetting and Knapp, 2001). To be capable of doing these, students must develop their Reading Habits on daily basis. Capability of understanding text and Reading Habits should be developed from early childhood through the whole life (Beck, Mckewon and Kucan, 2002). It is therefore not surprising that every nation prides itself in the reading culture of its literate population. A good reading culture in any nation is therefore an enviable virtue.
According to Grey (1984), reading influences the extent and accuracy of information as well as the attitudes, moral beliefs, judgements and action of readers. The Reading Habit is one of the powerful and lasting influences in the promotion of one’s personal development in particular and social progress in general. Regular and systematic reading sharpens the intellect, refines the emotions, elevates tastes and provides perspectives for one’s living; and thereby prepares him for an effective civilizing force tending to unite social groups through the dissemination of common experiences.

The habit of regular reading, according to Shabi and Udofia (2009), refines the reader; it awakes something inside someone that makes a person take their own life seriously. Ganguly (2004) argued that Reading Habit could be said to be a single aspect of the broad culture where reading for pleasure becomes a natural part of daily existence. He emphasized that over time reading ceases to become the uphill task of reading to pass examination, rather it takes on an intrinsic value, reading for the sake of reading until an inclination to further reading is developed.

Yet it is a known fact that students cannot fulfill their potential if they do not read widely.

**Attitude towards English**

An attitude is an expression of favor or disfavor toward a person, place, thing, or event. Thurstone (1946), defined an Attitude as the degree of positive or negative affect associated with some psychological object. By a ‘psychological object’, Thurstone meant any symbol, phrase, slogan, person, institution, ideal, or idea toward which people can differ with respect to positive or negative affect.

In the literature of psychology, the terms affect and feeling are used interchangeably. An individual who has associated positive affect or
feeling with some psychological object is said to like that object or to have a *favourable* attitude toward the object. An individual who has associated *negative* affect with the same psychological object would be said to dislike that object or to have an *unfavourable* attitude toward the object.

According to Oller (1979) “Attitudes are merely one of the types of factors that give rise to motivation which eventually result in attainment of proficiency in a second language. By this line of reasoning, attitudes are considered to be causally related to achievement in a second language, even though the relationship is not apt to be a very strong one”.

Besides the intellectual perspective, the nature of language learning has psychological and social aspects and depends primarily on the learners’ motivation and attitude to learn the target language (Padwick, 2010). Gardner and Lambert (1972) were of the view that the ability of the students to master a second language is not only influenced by the mental competence or, language skills, but also on the students’ attitudes and perceptions towards the target language. They also advocated that attitude could enhance the process of language learning, influence the nature of student’s behaviors and beliefs towards the other language, its culture and community, and this will in turn promote the tendency to acquire that language.

Baker (1992) proposed a comprehensive theoretical model, focusing on the importance of conducting attitudinal research in the field of language learning. He states that, “In the life of a language, attitudes to that language appear to be important in language restoration, preservation, decay or death.” De Bot et al. (2005) assert that language teachers, researchers and students should acknowledge that high motivation and positive attitude of students facilitate second language learning. Thus, if a learner does not have the interest and tendency in acquiring the target language to communicate with others, this learner will possess a negative attitude and
will not be motivated and enthusiastic in language learning. Therefore, learners’ attitudes could incorporate in language learning because it may influence their performance in acquiring the target language.

Aspects of Language Attitude

Learning process is regarded as a positive change in the individual’s personality in terms of the emotional, psychomotor (behavioral) as well as cognitive domains, since when one has learned a specific subject, s(he) is supposed to think and behave in a different manner and one’s beliefs have been distinguished (Kara, 2009). Furthermore, the learning process has social as well as psychological aspects besides the cognitive approach. Attitude concept can be viewed from these three dimensions. Each one of these dimensions has different features to bring out language attitude results. Accordingly, the attitude concept has three components, i.e. behavioral, cognitive and affective. These three attitudinal aspects are based on the three theoretical approaches of behaviorism, cognitivism and humanism respectively. In the following, the three aspects of attitude concept, i.e. behavioral, cognitive, and emotional aspects are briefly described.

Behavioral Aspect of Attitude

The behavioral aspect of attitude deals with the way one behaves and reacts in particular situations. In fact, successful language learning enhances the learners’ ability to identify themselves with the native speakers of that language and to acquire or adopt various aspects of behaviors which characterize the members of the target language community. Kara (2009) stated that, “Positive attitudes lead to the exhibition of positive behaviors toward courses of study, with participants absorbing themselves in courses and striving to learn more. Such students are also observed to be more eager to solve problems, to acquire the information and skills useful for daily life and to engage themselves emotionally.”
Cognitive Aspect of Attitude

This aspect of attitude involves the beliefs of the language learners about the knowledge that they receive and their understanding in the process of language learning. The cognitive attitude can be classified into four steps of connecting the previous knowledge and the new one, creating new knowledge, checking new knowledge, and applying the new knowledge in many situations.

Emotional Aspect of Attitude

Feng and Chen (2009) stated that the “learning process is an emotional process. It is affected by different emotional factors. The teacher and his students engage in various emotional activities in it and varied fruits of emotions are yielded.” Attitude can help the learners to express whether they like or dislike the objects or surrounding situations. It is agreed that the inner feelings and emotions of First Language learners influence their perspectives and their attitudes towards the target language (Choy and Troudi, 2006).

Learning a language is closely related to the attitude towards that language (Starks and Paltridge, 1996). Karahan (2007) avers that positive language attitudes towards English allow the learner to learner have positive orientation towards learning English. As such, attitudes may play a very crucial role in language learning as they would appear to influence students’ success or failure in their learning. With regard to Arab EFL learners, research is on to investigate learners’ motivation and attitude toward the English language.

Yamashita (2004) examined the relationship between both first language (L1) and second language (L2) reading attitudes, and learners’ performance in L2 extensive reading. Four reading attitude variables were identified - Comfort, Anxiety, Value and Self-perception - both in L1 and L2,
according to learners' responses to a questionnaire. Results of analyses show that the study supports the transfer of the affective domain of reading (i.e. attitudes) from L1 to L2. Also, from a more pedagogical point of view, the positive feeling towards reading, both in L1 and L2, facilitates learners' performance in extensive reading.

1.2 NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The need for teaching English in curricula in India has been stressed on time. The National Policy on Education (1992) stressed the importance of the study of English. Yamashita (2013) viewed that despite the growing number of studies highlighting the complex process of acquiring second language (L2) word recognition skills, comparatively little research has examined the reading ability in L2 learners; further, the existing results are inconclusive.

Melekoglu and Wilkerson (2013) examined the lack of reading motivation that impedes upper elementary and secondary school students' willingness to improve critical reading skills and strategies to be successful in school. Struggling readers often show a negative attitude towards reading tasks and manifest low motivation to read. There is limited research on reading motivation.

Reading is the means to gain knowledge, it is important to inculcate the habit of reading right from childhood. Reading something just before going to bed helps the child feels secure and more comfortable while sleeping. This bed-time reading habit will go a long way in making them better human beings. "To acquire the habit of reading is to construct for oneself a refuge from almost all the miseries of life" Maugham (1897).

Children who are introduced to reading at an early age are seen to have a better understanding of phonics. They acquire language skills with ease, have a richer vocabulary and possess greater cognitive abilities.
who grow up reading good books definitely stand out. The way they think and act is way different from those who have never been exposed to reading. Reading not only adds to their general knowledge but also shapes their personalities. Books are excellent sources of recreation; they help you relax and rejuvenate.

**Miller (2012)** described a number of research studies prove that wide reading improves children's comprehension, background knowledge, vocabulary, fluency, and writing. The author describes the classroom conditions and instructional practices that encourage wide reading and increase students' reading motivation such as choice in reading material, dedicating time for reading, and promoting children's literature.

Reading helps develop creative and critical thinking skills. It develops vocabulary, sharpens language skills and leads to greater cognitive development. The more one reads, the more the development of cognitive abilities and creative imagination. Reading improves grasping skills and sharpens the analytical and problem-solving abilities, and makes one a better decision-maker. Reading is a key to a wealth of knowledge and experience that links people in a way that extends to distant environs and distant times. Reading provides experience that expands one’s horizons of knowledge, identifies, and extends interests and goes deeper into understandings of the self, of other human beings, and of the world.


> Complex society is dependent every hour of every day upon the capacity of its people to read, write, to make complex judgments, and to act in the light of fairly extensive information. Where there is not this kind of base on which to build, modern social and economic developments are simply impossible.

Obviously, reading is a very complex act and the need is urgent for a clear understanding of all that is involved in efficient reading. **Kohl (2014)** in his
book ‘Reading How to’ has rightly remarked, “People who don’t read or write themselves with any frequency or joy have a hard time getting others to read and write. It is difficult to teach people to value what you yourself do not value”.

“We read to learn, we read to live another way. We read to quench some blind and shocking fire. We read to weigh the worth of what we have done or dare to do. We read to share our awful secrets with someone we know will not refuse us. We red our way into the presence of great wisdom, vast and safe suffering, or into the untidy corners of another kind of life we fear to lead”— remarked Jennings (1964). Bruno (1991) rightly remarked, “If the first button of a man’s coat is wrongly put, all the rest are bound to be crooked”. Reading is that first button in the garment of education.

Why do the world’s leaders attach so much importance to the training of reading? - Because they know that “leading nations are the reading nations.” Jefferson (1787) wrote in one of his letters, “People who read can be free because reading banished ignorance and superstition.” “Who leads mankind?” asked Voltaire - “Those who know how to read and write.” The printed word has the power to revolutionize our ways of thinking and living.

According to Pani (2003), Mental modelling can be an effective pedagogic strategy in Indian classrooms in terms of motivating the learners to develop improved reading strategies. A mental model is an explanation of someone's thought process about how something works in the real world. Our mental models help shape our behaviour and define our approach to solving problems and carrying out tasks. Reading strategies and metacognition make the learning process explicit. Mental modelling enhances the learning process, and the learners who develop good mental models exhibit greater learning outcomes and efficiency than who use less
adequate models in various domains (Mayer, 1989). Guided reading and paired reading can be utilised in the classrooms to develop mental modelling which will help in enhancing the reading skills of the students.

Several intervention studies predating the NRP report (Duffy and Roehler, 1987; Palincsar and Brown, 1984; and Pressley, 1998) suggest that instruction in metacognitive and reading strategies improves reading comprehension. The National Reading Panel’s (NICHD, 2000) synthesis of comprehension research studies indicates explicit or formal instruction in the application of a multiple-strategy method has been shown to be highly effective in enhancing understanding. The strategies are Comprehension monitoring, Cooperative learning, Use of graphic and semantic organizers, Question answering, Question generation, Story structure, and Summarization.

Guthrie et al. (2006), Van Keer and Verhaeghe (2005), and Guthrie et al. (2004) found that instruction using multiple strategies can create more strategic readers and increases reading comprehension. Paris and Paris (2007), Hall and McClellan (2005), Williams (2005), Williams, Hall, and Lauer (2004), and Garner and Bochna (2004) published five studies related to text structure since the NRP met our criteria. Overall, the results support teaching text structure to young readers to improve their reading comprehension. Such comprehension is necessary for organizing expository information and ultimately making sense of expository texts.

A positive attitude toward learning the English language is one of the leading predictors of success in gaining fluency. A study by the Pew Hispanic Center (2006) found most U.S. Latinos believe it is important for immigrants to speak English to be part of American society. This finding was consistent across income levels and political affiliations, as well as the respondent’s own fluency in English and length of U.S.
residency. Compared to whites and African-Americans, higher percentages of Hispanics believed it is important to teach English to the children of immigrant families.

Keeping in view the complexity of the reading process, the researcher felt the need to experiment some curricular innovations like Mental Modeling that would serve to improve the reading competency of students. This thought reveals that the need of the hour is either the application of modern techniques of teaching reading or the development of new methods of teaching reading that result in enhancement of reading competency in English, in improving Reading Habit as well as Attitude towards English of Students. Hence, it was found necessary to test the effectiveness of Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction over the Activity Oriented Method of Instruction on enhancing Reading Competency in English among students at upper primary school level.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present study aims at preparing Instructional Plans using Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategies and exploring its effectiveness in enhancing Reading Competency in English among Upper Primary School Students. It was also intended to test the effectiveness of Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction in improving Reading Habit as well as Attitude towards English among Upper Primary School Students. All these intents and purposes were adequately and aptly interlaced into the substance of the present study. The topic of investigation was thus entitled
‘EFFECTIVENESS OF MENTAL MODELLING BASED ON MULTIPLE STRATEGY INSTRUCTION FOR ENHANCING READING COMPETENCY IN ENGLISH AMONG UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS’.

1.4 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

The key terms used in the title of the study are defined below.

1. Effectiveness: According to the Dictionary of Education (2008), it means the effect of an experimental factor under controlled conditions, i.e. with other factors held constant. It is the changed result or outcome produced by an action (Good, 1973). In this study, effectiveness refers to the desired change in the learner behavior as a result of the experimental intervention.

2. Mental Modelling: A Mental Model is the external representation of internal symbols in one’s thought processes. Cognitive scientists conceive mental model as an internal scale-model representation of an external reality. It is built on-the-fly, from knowledge of prior experience, schema segments, perception, and problem-solving strategies. Cognitive scientists often use academic studies of mental models to gain information on the processes of the mind. This information can then be used to contribute to work on artificial intelligence and simulations (Markham, 1999). In this study, Mental Modelling refers to the mental images or mental collages which are created by the reader while reading something.

3. Multiple Strategy Instruction: Multiple Strategy Instruction, proposed by National Reading Panel (2000), implies those strategies that can be employed in the classroom in appropriate combinations for making reading more effective. The strategies suggested are Active Listening, Comprehension Monitoring, Mental Imagery, Mnemonics, Graphic Organizers, Vocabulary Instruction, Question Answering, Question
Generation, Story Structure, Summarization, Multiple Strategy Instruction, and Cooperative Learning by Peers.

In this study, **Multiple Strategy Instruction** refers to the employment of the appropriate combinations of strategies proposed by National Reading Panel for classroom instruction.

4. Enhancing: The term ‘enhance’ means intensify, increase or further improve the quality, value or extent of (*Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010*).

In this study, **enhancing** refers to the improvement in the learner regarding Reading Skill.

5. Reading Competency: Read means look at and comprehend the meaning of written or printed matter by interpreting the characters or symbols of which it is composed (*Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010*). Competence/competency are the ability to do something successfully or efficiently (*Oxford Dictionary of English, 2010*). Reading Competency means the capacity of the mind to perceive and understand; it is the power to grasp ideas.

In this study, **Reading Competency** is the act or skill of interpreting the written test with comprehension. Both Print Skills and Meaning Skills were included for the study. Print Skills include Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Spelling, and Fluency. Meaning Skills include Vocabulary, Background Knowledge and Reading Comprehension.

6. Upper Primary School: Those classes recognized by the Directorate of Education, Government of Kerala, for giving instruction to Students at Standard V, VI, and VII (*SCERT, 2014*).

In this study, Standard VI from Kerala State Syllabus was selected to represent this level.
1.5 VARIABLES USED FOR THE STUDY

The purpose of a research study is to discover unknown qualities of persons or things. To measure these qualities we define variables. Something that can change in value and can be measured is a variable. It can be an aspect of an experimental situation or a characteristic that changes in different individuals. For an experimental study, there are independent variables, dependent variables and extraneous variables.

**Independent Variables**

The variables that are manipulated by the experimenter or are suspected of being the cause in the experiment are called independent variables. “It is under the direct control of the experimenter who may vary it in any direction” (Sax, 1979). In this experiment, Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction and the Activity Oriented Method of Teaching were the independent variables involved in the study.

**Dependent Variables**

Dependent variables are the conditions or characteristics that appear, disappear, or change as the experimenter introduces, removes or changes the independent variable. The dependent variables used in this study were Reading Competency, Attitude towards English, and Reading Habit.

**Extraneous Variables**

Extraneous variables are independent variables that are not related to the purpose of the study, but may affect the dependent variables. They control the relationship between the independent and dependent variables either in the research design or through statistical procedures. The extraneous variables used in this study were Gender, Locale of School, and Management of School.
1.5 HYPOTHESES FORMULATED FOR THE STUDY

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study.

1. Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction will be significantly more effective than Activity Oriented Method of Instruction in enhancing **Reading Competency in English** among Upper Primary School Students
   i. for the Total Sample;
   ii. for the Gender Sub Samples;
   iii. for the Locale Sub Samples;
   iv. for the Sub Samples based on Management of Schools;
   v. for the Print Skills, viz. Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Spelling, and Fluency;
   vi. for the Meaning Skills, viz. Vocabulary, Background Knowledge, and Reading Comprehension.

2. Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction will be significantly more effective than Activity Oriented Method of Instruction in improving **Reading Habit** among Upper Primary School Students.

3. Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction will be significantly more effective than Activity Oriented Method of Instruction in improving **Attitude towards English** among Upper Primary School Students.

1.7 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were:

1. to compare the effectiveness of Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction and Activity Oriented Method of Instruction in enhancing **Reading Competency in English** among Upper Primary School Students
i. for the Total Sample;
ii. for the Gender Sub Samples;
iii. for the Locale Sub Samples;
iv. for the Sub Samples based on Management of Schools;
v. for the Print Skills, viz. Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Spelling and Fluency;
vi. for the Meaning Skills, viz. Vocabulary, Background Knowledge and Reading Comprehension.

2. to compare the effectiveness of Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction in improving Reading Habit among Upper Primary School Students.

3. to compare the effectiveness of Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction in improving Attitude towards English among Upper Primary School Students.

1.8 METHODOLOGY IN BRIEF

Experimental Method was employed for the present study. The Experimental Method was adopted to explore the effectiveness of Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction for enhancing Reading Competency among Upper Primary School Students. The study also intended to assess the effectiveness of Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction in improving Reading Habit as well as Attitude towards English among Upper Primary School Students. The research design adopted for the study was Pre-test Post-test Non Equivalent Groups Design.

Purposive Sampling Technique was employed for gathering data for the experiment. The Sample consisted of 284 Upper Primary School Students of Standard VI studying the State Syllabus of Kerala. Due consideration
was given to Gender, Locale of School, and Management of School while selecting the sample of Upper Primary School Students.

The **tools and materials** used for the study were: **1.** General Data Sheet, **2.** Raven’s Coloured Progressive Matrices, **3.** Test on Reading Competency in English, **4.** Inventory on Reading Habit, **5.** Scale on Attitude towards English, **6.** Instructional Plans using Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy, and **7.** Instructional Plans using Activity Oriented Method.

The **statistical techniques** employed for analysis of data include Test of Significant Difference between Means (t-test) and Tests of Variances, viz. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA).

1.9 **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Though many studies have been conducted in the area of Reading Skill and Reading Comprehension, studies exploring the effect of Mental Modelling and Multiple Strategies have not been attempted. The Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction was designed to help Upper Primary School Students to enhance their Reading Competency in English. It aims to improve students’ thinking processes by providing various strategies such as Active Listening, Comprehension Monitoring, Mental Imagery, Mnemonics, Graphic Organizers, Vocabulary Instruction, Question Answering, Question Generation, Story Structure, Summarization, Multiple Strategy Instruction, and Cooperative Learning by Peers. It helps to develop and facilitate progress towards higher order thinking skills.

- It is expected that this study would contribute some highlights towards new methods of teaching reading. The findings of the study are expected to be useful in educational planning and in modifying the curriculum.
Introduction

- Mental Modelling promotes imagination, critical thinking and creativity. It develops a positive attitude towards language learning among students.

- It will be useful in developing interest of the students in learning the subject. Teachers can easily identify the different motivational patterns of her students and communicate and interact frequently with them.

- It is hoped that findings of the study will help all those who are concerned with the field of education.

In the present study, efforts were taken to avoid errors so as to make the results of the study valid and reliable. Since the Mental Modelling based on Multiple Strategy Instruction was learner-oriented, several tools were administered both as Pre-tests and Post-tests. Keen and meticulous care was given to all details in the conduct of the study. Yet, some limitations have crept in due to practical reasons. Though the population for the experimental study was Upper Primary School Students of Kerala, the sample was taken from Kottayam and Pathanamthitta Districts only. Also, though the study was aimed at Upper Primary School Students, only Students from Standard VI were selected for the experiment. Besides, various extraneous variables, which may have its influence on Reading Competency, Reading Habit as well as Attitude towards English, could not be brought under the preview of the study.

1.10 ORGANISATION OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The Guidelines of the University Graduate Council, approved by the University Grants Commission (2006), is adhered to in reporting the research work. The American Psychological Association (2010) style is adopted for citations within the text as well as for the Bibliography. The report of the study is organized in six chapters.
Chapter I: **Introduction** presents a background of the problem, need and significance of the study, statement of the problem, definition of the key terms, variables used for the study, hypotheses formulated for the study, objectives of the study, the methodology in brief, and the scope and limitations of the study.

Chapter II: **Theoretical Overview** details the theoretical backgrounds of reading competency, mental modelling, as well as multiple strategy instruction.

Chapter III: **Review of Related Literature** summarizes the survey of literature related to the areas under study, viz. those related to Reading Skill, Mental Models, and Multiple Strategy Instruction.

Chapter IV: **Methodology** deals with the research methods adopted, variables of the study, sample selected, research design of the experiment, tools used for the study, procedure for data collection and statistical techniques employed.

Chapter V: **Analysis and Interpretation of Data** statistically analyses the data gathered and interpret the findings under four major sections.

Chapter VI: **Summary, Conclusions and Suggestions** presents the study in retrospect, conclusions based on the findings, tenability of the hypotheses, educational implications of the study and suggestions for further research.

The **Bibliography** and the **Appendices** are included at the end of the Research Report.