CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been many studies over the years in the field of culture and its importance in language learning. For the purpose of my research I have reviewed some of the available literature in this field and also with regard to personality and motivation in this section. They have been divided into categories as follows:

1. Culture and second language acquisition.
2. Culture in the English Language classroom
3. Culture shock and its effect on language acquisition.
6. Book review

2.1.CULTURE AND SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Spackman in his research draws the connection between culture and Second Language Acquisition. He mentions Brown’s definition of culture as “the ideas, customs, skills, arts and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time. (Brown, 2007, p 380). He also gives the definition of Diaz- Rico and Weed (2006) and says that this definition has an advantage in that it views culture as a dynamic process, and not a static list of facts to be memorized. Robinson-Stuart and Nocon (1996) also feel that culture cannot be restricted within a textbook framework, like perhaps history, wherein concepts are taught and learnt and may perhaps change slightly over a period of time. They emphasise that culture is not something that can be learnt superficially by just learning about the customs, festivals, traditions, food habits, cuisines etc,. Culture must be learnt through language because one cannot be separated from the other.

Therefore second language acquisition is second culture acquisition.
He also says that this is true even if the culture in which the learners are studying is not the culture of the target language. This particular idea is especially relevant to the research undertaken presently by me as students who come to India from various countries grapple with the language and culture of this country.

Spackman gives a number of examples from the Japanese EFL context. He points out the several linguistic differences between British/American English culture and Japanese culture. Japanese language reflects the cultural hierarchy prevalent in its society. An extreme amount of deference is exhibited in the way people address one another. In English the word brother is used to refer to a relationship between siblings regardless of whether it is older or younger brother who is being referred to. Whereas in Japanese there are four word which bring out the distinctions. 1st and 3rd person are also used to denote respect and reverence while speaking. One can see another important cultural difference in the Japanese culture when people are sometimes not addressed by their names. Their occupation or their relationship to the speaker is referred to instead.

Strangely, the English culture norms are not used in class by some English teachers in Japan as they believe that students may experience culture shock. So they teach them the compound words like elder brother and younger brother so that they get accustomed to the phrase before they encounter the word by itself.

He then moves on to the meaning of acculturation. He puts forth the idea that this term has two meanings. We generally understand acculturation as getting used to the new culture, adjusting to the ways of the new environment that one finds himself in. However, researchers Brown and Schumann use this term to mean a certain period of time when the maximum learning of L2 takes place. A ground-breaking research by Brown changed the idea that the critical period is when language learning is optimum, rather he postulated that acculturation into the new culture is when this phenomenon is at its height.

According to Brown, maximum learning of the second language takes place when certain conditions are met. This happens when second language learners are going through the third stage in the acculturation process. After the culture shock stage comes the third stage which is a long period of slow recovery.
As Brown (1980, p.61) phrases it, “stage three may provide not only the optimal distance but the optimal cognitive and affective tension to produce the necessary pressure to acquire the language”. Brown also gives the caveat that if students fail to master the language at this stage, they may never acquire it to a high level. This particular theory is relevant to the present research as it is important to help students move out of the culture shock stage and into the recovery period as quickly as possible. Once again the role of the teacher needs to be emphasised here as he/ she is significant in moving students on to the next stage.

According to Schumann (1986, p. 379) acculturation is when the learner is most comfortable socially and psychologically with the speakers of the target language group. He reiterates that only when the learner makes an effort to assimilate himself into the target language group will he be able to learn the language successfully. Brown’s Optimal Distance Model suggests that a learner must be an optimum distance from both cultures, that is, from his own home culture and from the culture of the target language. We find that Schumann’s model is stronger than that of Brown’s but the focus is similarly on the importance of the level of learner acculturation. Both models point to the fact that acculturation is directly proportional to second language learning.

It can be understood therefore that the process of acculturation is something that is imperative to language learning. The danger in not doing so is that grammar forms can get fossilized due to an inability to properly synchronize language study with acculturation. We see that both models conclude that acculturation can be an important factor for successful second language acquisition.

An important study undertaken by Bilal Genc and Erdogan Bada (2005) aimed to justify the teaching of culture in a language classroom. Scholars like Byram and Kramsch have emphasized that the relationship between second language teaching and teaching of culture of the target language has no watertight distinctions. Pulverness (2003) has brought out the intertwined relation between culture and language. According to Bada (2000:101), “the need for cultural literacy in ELT arises mainly from the fact that most language learners, not exposed to cultural elements of the society in questions, seem to encounter significant hardship in communicating meaning to native speakers.” This has become so important that studying culture has become a part of the curriculum design in many universities (Sysoyenev & Donelson 2002).
Of the many scholars and their works- Wittgenstein- (1980; 1999), Saussure- (1966), Foucault (1994), Dilthey- (1989), Adorno- (1993), Davidson- (1999) and Chomsky- (1968), the most important are Sapir-(1962) and Whorf- (1956). Linguistic Relativity is the term closely connected with these scholars. The main idea that is found in their researches is that the world is perceived through our native language and the distinctions and categorizations found in it and the second and more important is that no two languages are the same and therefore similarities are often difficult to find between the two languages.

One of the researchers Kitao (2000) enumerates some of the benefits of teaching culture in the L2 classroom. The objective of studying the culture of the target language can motivate students to learn the language and it facilitates the learning in a more conducive way. Learning culture helps students relate the abstract sounds and forms of a language to real people and places (Chastain 1971). Teaching of culture also motivates students and increases their interest in the target language. In addition, it plays a useful role in general education since studying culture helps in the understanding of geography, history etc. of the target culture.

The phenomenon of ethnocentricity tends to limit the self, since an individual fails to look beyond his psychological, social and cultural circles. Therefore culture classes are important in enabling individuals to see themselves from a different point of view. Studying another culture would help students overcome the limits of mono-cultural perspective and reach the realm of another perspective. It can be clearly understood that culture classes do motivate L2 learners and the methodology also seems to have a more humanizing effect.

The methodology employed was to administer a questionnaire to 38 students (28 female and 10 male); third year Turkish student-teachers of English studying at the English Language Teaching Department of Cukurova University. The subjects of the study share certain cultural characteristics as they are graduates of either private or state secondary schools from all over Turkey. Therefore, After analyses using SPSS and observing frequencies of values and their Chi-square dependence significance, the researchers put forward their findings theme-wise.

The first theme addressed the question of whether the culture course contributed to any of the language skills of the participants. The response was 100% affirmative, suggesting that the course influenced language skills positively. Specifically speaking about skills, the participants
reported that their speaking skills had improved the most- 42.6% followed by reading and listening skills- 26.3% each and writing by a small 5.3%. The theme of cultural awareness was of prime importance as one of the main objectives of the course was to raise awareness about the target language culture among the learners. When asked whether the culture course helped them change their attitude towards the target culture- nearly 75% of the participants expressed positive thoughts about this item. Theme four was the contribution made by the culture class to the participant’s prospective teaching profession. This was an open-ended question and the responses were grouped into six points, namely:

a) Teaching language is also teaching culture.

b) Familiarization with the target society.

c) Assistance in teaching grammar.

d) Enhancing communicative competence in L2

e) Expanding vocabulary.

f) Providing information prior to a visit to the U.K or the U.S.A

The findings of this study suggest that a culture class can positively affect language skills, cultural awareness and attitudes towards native and target societies. More importantly, this study implies that a culture class should be included in the curriculum of language teaching departments.

The Importance of Teaching Culture in the Foreign Language Classroom is a significant contribution to the study of culture and second language acquisition. Written by Dimitiros Thanasoulas (2001), the main premise of the paper is that being able to communicate effectively does not mean that one is proficient in the language. It also means that having communicative competence is on par with cultural competence. Appreciating another culture or cultures is certain to inculcate a healthy amount of respect and empathy for the same. If one just learns the grammatical forms, is proficient with the lexicon and is able to discourse fluently in that language it is not sufficient to say that he has learnt the foreign language. He must also be able to
clearly decipher certain culture specific meanings that appear in every individual language. (Byram, Morgan et al., 1994: 4)

Although we have crossed the era of rote learning, learning through language drills, the methodology of teaching language is still riddled by unshakeable viewpoints about the nature of language learning and teaching. These have led to the gradual undermining of the teaching of culture. This paper aims to shed some light on the role of teaching culture in fostering cross-cultural understanding which transcends the boundaries of linguistic forms. Scholars like Kramsch (1993) and Politzer (1959) feel that it is pointless to language by itself without referring to the context in which it operates, because then it would mean that a teacher would only be teaching symbols which the learner may not be able to make sense of or even worse many attach the wrong meaning to words. (Politzer, 1959: 100-101)

Until recently, two main perspectives governed the teaching of culture. One was the transmission of factual and cultural information which may focus on the customs, habits and folklore of everyday life. The other perspective has been to implant culture within language thereby attempting draw parallels between one’s own country and the target country. Researchers Lessard-Clouston (1997) observe that in the past, people learned a foreign language in order to study its literature. Thanasoulas then traces the inculcation of culture in language teaching over the years through the various methodologies such as the audio-lingual method and the communicative approach.

By the 1980s scholars began to discover the dynamics of culture and its all-important contribution to successful language learning (Byram, Morgan et al., 1994: 5). The main contribution of culture is that it helps to combat cultural distance that students are faced with when exposed to foreign literature. Kramsch (1993, 1987 a) also feels that the teaching of culture should be done as process of interpersonal interaction rather than a transfer of information about cultural facts. Teachers do play an important role when they have help students acculturate with the new culture. (Singhal, 1998). Thanasoulas feels that as teachers “we should concern ourselves with culture because, even though it is inherent in what we teach, to believe that whoever is learning the foreign language is also learning the cultural knowledge and skills required to be a competent L2/FL speaker ‘denies the complexity of culture, language learning, and communication’ (Lessard-Clouston, 1997). Second, it is deemed important to
include culture in the foreign language curriculum because it helps avoid the stereotypes that Nemni (1992) has discussed and the present study has intimated. The third reason for expressly teaching culture in the foreign language classroom is to enable students to take control of their own learning as well as to achieve autonomy by evaluating and questioning the wider context within which the learning of the target language is embedded.” (Thanasoulas, p. 12)

He then discusses some practical consideration in incorporating culture into the foreign language classroom. He says that it is a known fact that culture really cannot be taught. What can be done is to make students understand that no culture is superior or inferior to their own, just that there are differences. Another aim that should be uppermost in educators’ mind is to help students be aware of the specialty of their own culture, “to provide them with some kind of meta-language in order to talk about culture” (p.13). By exploring their own culture they are ready to reflect upon the values, expectations and traditions of others with a higher degree of intellectual objectivity. One suggested activity is that young learners be given an opportunity to part-take of their own culture such as singing their national songs, social festivities or national sports. Teachers could enhance the cultural experience by bringing all possible realia to create the right atmosphere. These could include posters, pictures and maps. Another interesting activity would be to send students on ‘cultural errands’ to supermarkets and department stores and get them to write down names of imported goods. Students could also make a list of all those characteristics and traits that supposedly distinguish the home and target cultures. Some examples could be music, architecture, arts, food and clothing. This helps teachers identify “stereotypical lapses” and help them overcome their misunderstandings.

Henrichsen (1998) gives several ideas as to how students can bridge the gap between their native culture and the host culture. Culture assimilators and cultoons help students interpret the meaning of the behaviour and speech of people they interact with. Cultural Capsules (Singhal, 1998) and Culturgrams (Peck, 1998)expose students to foreign civilization, thereby drawing comparisons between home culture and target culture.

Not just linguistic forms, students also need to familiarise themselves with various forms of non-verbal communication such as gestures and facial expressions which are typical in the target culture. These communication markers are generally taken to be universal phenomena, when actually they are culture specific. Finally Thanasoulas concludes by reiterating that the
teaching of culture should not and cannot be separated from second language teaching. ‘Culture should be our message to students and language our medium (Peck, 1998). Again, like most other researchers Thanasoulas emphasises the fact that the onus rests on the teachers to convey cultural meaning and introduce students to a kind of learning that challenges their notions of culture and identity.

2.2. CULTURE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Qian Liu’s research on the factors influencing pronunciation accuracy points out how the degree of accuracy of pronunciation of Chinese adult second language learners is influenced by variables such as mother tongue influence, and individual aptitude. Many researchers have identified the sources of interlanguage pronunciation errors. By doing so they have helped improve the English pronunciation of second language learners. Contrastive Analysis is one method wherein the comparison of the learner’s native language with that of the target language would help in predicting the errors (Dalton 1994). Pronunciation of nationalities like Polish, Spanish and Chinese was examined by researcher Flege and Davidian (1984) and they came to the conclusion that L2 speech production is affected by both developmental and transfer processes. As for task variables, Thompson (1991) conducted an experiment on 36 native speakers of Russian in various tasks such as sentence reading, prose reading and spontaneous speech. He found that the task they were involved in had an effect on their pronunciation.

Individual aptitude and its connection to pronunciation was tested by Jilkal et al (2007) and Haslam (2010) and they found that individual aptitude is a decisive factor in learning a foreign language sound system. The hypotheses put across by Qian Liu were that pronunciation errors arise from Negative transfer if the learner’s first language and secondly that pronunciation accuracy is influences by Task variables and individual aptitude. (Liu, p. 115)

The experiment was broken down into three parts- a) pre-test, b) intervention for the experiment group and c) post-test. These were graded progressively in terms of difficulty beginning with words with an emphasis on sounds, moving on to vocabulary reading, sentence reading and finally 3 to 5 minutes of free speech. In the analysis Liu mentions that the ten target
sounds were chosen for their frequency of mispronunciation. /v/ and /ɔ/ did not present much difficulty despite not being present in Mandarin. Nevertheless, there were still a few participants who mispronounced it due to the similarity of these sound with Chinese [w] and [s]. There were nine other sounds that were mispronounced proving that similar sounds in the L1 had a significant influence on the pronunciation of the learners.

Secondly Liu examined the effect of task variables on pronunciation accuracy and found that students made the most progress in T2 (post-test, vocabulary reading) and their performance deteriorated in T3 (sentence reading) and T4 (free speech). This was because in T4 the students’ attention should be divided among lexical access, syntactic well-formedness and discourse organisation. This proved that task variables have their role to play in the improvement of pronunciation accuracy. Liu also talks about the third factor- individual aptitude which influences the improvement of pronunciation accuracy. Krashen & Terrel (1998) categorise learners into three types based on the level of ability to monitor their pronunciation successfully. The categories are under-users, over-users and optimal users. According to the researchers they define monitor under-users as those performers who do not seem to check their pronunciation to any extent, even when situations are conducive. The over-users are extremely cautious and conscious about their pronunciation and constantly check their output. Due to this, fluency is sacrificed for the sake of accuracy. The Optimal monitor users are those who use the monitor when it is appropriate and it does not affect their flow of speech. Liu explains in detail the performance of her students to illustrate in detail the three categories. She summarizes that language aptitude fortunately is not an all-or-nothing situation. This aptitude can be inculcated in students through right training (Kenworthy, 1989). She concludes by proving both her hypotheses by stating that negative transfer constitutes the basis for the mispronunciation of language learners.

Culture and the ‘good teacher’ in the English language classroom is a paper written by Colin Sowden and in it he describes the role of the teacher as a cultural ambassador in an English classroom. Culture, he says, has taken more of a centre stage in the present post-method era. However, there is a large lacuna in the understanding of the concept of culture and how culture teaching can completely replace the space taken up by methodology. It is also true that the focus has turned from the teacher to a more learner-centric teaching approach. He notes that the term
‘culture’ was easy to define in the past. However, the term is used in such a broad sense in the present that one cannot be absolutely confident of all that it stands for.

Holliday (1994: 29) argues that the typical teacher in the context of expatriate teaching will be in touch with several cultures. One would be that of the teacher himself, another would be the culture of the target language and the third that of the students. The culture of the academic discipline also would have to be taken into account here. In order to be effective in their teaching it is imperative for teachers to take into account all of these cultures and how they influence the attitude and style of their students. It is important for them to work with the cultures they encounter rather than trying to impose upon the students their own cultures. Teachers should be aware that there is a diversity of culture even if the nationality of their students in homogenous. This is the case even if the teacher’s nationality is the same as that of his/her students. This brings us to the fact that teachers also carry their own cultural baggage. Kramsch acknowledges that learning a second language necessarily involves learning about the cultures associated with it. Nevertheless, it does not mean that students ought to assimilate all that the other culture offers or represents. She feels that there must be a ‘border zone’ between the target culture and the local culture. This enables both teachers as well as learners to meaningfully interact with each other in a cultural context. Thus we see that the researchers mentioned above are of the opinion that the importance of the official teaching curriculum is not as important as the emphasis that must be given to the concern for culture.

In order to meet this challenge several courses have been developed to address the question of inter-cultural competence and this is done not just for students but also for teachers. Most of the courses touch upon culture in its most basic sense, but they do sensitize participants to the cultural issues involved in operating in a trans-cultural situation and prepare them to face the challenges that will probably arise there.

Byram (1997: 1) opines that in order to develop familiarity with any culture one should actually live within that culture for a considerable amount of time. Being a tourist constitutes looking at the culture from the outside, rather than being a sojourner, wherein one is actually an active participant in the functioning of the community. (Barro et al, 1998: 83). According to
Byram inter-cultural communicative competence is a conglomeration of these components: knowledge, attitude, skills of interpretation and comparison, and skills of discovery and interaction (p. 307). These attributes are essentially those which are inherent and can be developed without the intervention of an educational institution, Byram feels that they should be taught in a classroom setting.

Another important consideration is the personal qualities of a teacher which would help him/her to navigate effectively around cultural issues. Good inter-cultural communicative competence is the key to overall success in the classroom and this fact remains the same, not only over the years, but also over the centuries. A truly effective teacher is one who can relate to learners, displays great enthusiasm for the subject, someone who is a well-rounded, confident and experienced individual. The question of teacher development arises then. If what the teacher does in the class mainly depends on who he/she is as a person then it is imperative to develop oneself if he/she wishes to be a good teachers. This is a difficult task as it implies that the teacher must undergo changes in the way he/she thinks, behaves, interacts- all of which threaten the security and self-image of the individual. One can overcome this obstacle through the process of self-exploration which would help the teacher to progressively peel the various personal and cultural layers that they have accumulated. This would lead to a situation wherein teachers would be in a position to deal more easily with inter-cultural challenge: the more we understand the world, human relations and ourselves, the better able we will be to empathize with others and make connections. (p.309)

The influence of culture, particularly on writing of Arabic speaking students, has been carefully studied by Dr. Ruwaida Abu Rass (2010). Not only does she review and strengthen the data on cultural transfer by Arab Muslim students writing in English, but also examines the cultural impact of Islam on such writing. It is an acknowledged fact that Arab writers have several problems but this is the first time that a cultural/religious interpretation was given to this issue.

Since behavior is largely influenced by native culture, it is inevitable that writing will be influenced by it as well. There have been some studies done in the area of cultural influence on writing. Some of them are Fillmore, Ammon, McLaughlin and Ammon, (1993). These studies
unearthed the effectiveness of the communicative approach on different group learning styles. The subjects of this study were derived from students who were learning English in the United States who were essentially from Chinese and Hispanic backgrounds. Amazingly, the results showed diametrically opposite findings for preferred learning and teaching methodologies. On one hand the Chinese preferred to have a completely teacher-centric language learning environment whereas the Hispanic students wanted a more open-ended co-operative method of learning where the emphasis is more on the learner, rather than on the facilitator. (Fillmore et al, 1993, p. 18).

Another research was conducted at the English Department in the Academic Arab Institute for Teacher Training at Beit Berl College. Eighteen female students from the first year were chosen for this project and it is important to note that all students in this institute are Muslims. They subjects of the study underwent a four-hour compulsory course in writing. The main emphasis of this course was that students should obtain proficiency in writing in terms of content and organization of the content material. Data comprised of these students portfolios and their writing from which error analysis was done also comprised the data. These were analysed using qualitative research methods in order to have a deep insight of the influence of the first culture on the writing of these students.

There were two samples that were taken from each student’s portfolio. One was a topic concerning their expectations as freshmen at the college and for this they hadn’t had any prior instruction. The second paragraph was given at the end of the first semester and students could choose any one topic from several. They had to provide examples to support their topic sentences. From the analysis of these paragraphs the researcher was able to identify and categorise the errors and problems that stem from cultural transfer. Quoting from an example Ruwaida notes that Arab students have a tendency to be long winded where their sentence structures are concerned. This reflects the use of repetition in Arabic for the sake of persuasion. In order to convey emphasis students tend to write more synonyms in the same sentence. Another example shows a unity of belief which has been gleaned from the following superlatives culled from one student’s writing- “the best English teacher; the friendly teacher, the closest friend, (this) college is the best one.”
This unity of belief, which is predominantly found in their religion as well, is that the only way, and there is only one, according to them, indicates that to become a successful teacher one has to follow the one true path. The other category which was identified was ‘group orientation’ reflected in the students’ use of possessive pronouns to express their feelings or wishes. Thirdly their unity of belief or the straight path shows there is only one way, one path for Muslims. Most of their work begins or ends with the mention of god- for e.g. “under the name of God,” or “God willing”.

A dichotomy in all aspects of life is seen in their writing because they believe in the ‘only way’. This is termed as bi-polarity by the researcher and it is seen in the use of words such as ‘all’, ‘best’ and ‘ideal’. This shows that for the students there can be no two ways, or alternatives about any question. Either it is right or wrong, since there is supposed to be only one way. Everything is perceived in black and white and there seems to be no space for shades of grey. Where transmission of material is concerned, Muslim students are expected to follow the straight path and they expect to be given the truth from their instructors and elders rather than sourcing the material by themselves from various origins. They take upon themselves receptive roles rather than constructive ones. The findings prove that the researcher’s observations correlate with Derrich & Gmuca (1985) who argue that there is no ambiguity in Arab students’ writing. Other theorists’ posits are also substantiated through this research such as Gliesnan, 1983; Johnstone, 1989 & Nydell, 1987; Al-Khatib, 2001 & 1994 & Feghali, 1997. These research findings have an implication in the teaching of language because of the multicultural nature of any second language classroom. The following points further the goal of language teaching, namely- language awareness discussions, acquainting the writing instructors with the culture of their students, text analysis and cultural interpretation. Since Arab and English cultures and languages are diametrically opposite in that the Arab culture is strongly influenced by one religion- Islam, the English language and culture transverses boundaries and borders, religions and cultures. The main conclusion of this research is that scholars who design curriculums must keep in mind the consideration of culture.

K. Meenakshi (2010), from the Vellore Institute of Technology presented some reflection on the use of instructionist and learner-centred activities. She has described those activities that help Chinese students in India learn English in more effective ways.
Chinese students, generally, are highly motivated and have a positive attitude. However, the English language learning proceeds at a slow rate in China due to the lack of opportunities to use the target language. South Indian technical universities present an attractive alternative to these students since they provide quality education. In spite of completing qualifying exams in China such as College English Test-(CET-4) or National English Test (NET4; Net 6), many of them are still not comfortable in the use of the language. The researcher identifies two main reasons for this- limited vocabulary and fear of making mistakes in front of peers and the teacher. A special course- *English For Chinese* was developed for these students in order to integrate traditional classroom lectures with learner-centred activities. An instructionist approach (to teach something in a formal, teacher-led way) was adopted for these students because it essentially embodies the culture of schooling in China.

The main idea of developing this course was to address the specific needs of this student group- that of retaining the methodology they are used to as well as keeping their cultural needs in mind.

Teachers, in Chinese culture were, and still are, regarded as those possessing sacrosanct knowledge and questioning them in any way is considered an offence. This is also one of the reasons why there is very little response when questions are invited by the teachers. If the teacher wishes to inculcate in students a completely different methodology of learning and teaching, the transition must be gradual and respectful of the learners’ cultural preferences for particular kinds of learning.

Fear of losing face is another reason for Chinese students’ silence in class. they give tremendous importance to maintaining dignity in class and providing wrong answers may lead to a situation where they feel they will ‘lose face’. It is, indeed, a challenge for teachers to create a different learning environment for Chinese students where they can be comfortable using the language in real communicative contexts.

Specifically, the course *English for Chinese* was designed and developed with the following objectives:

- To enrich students’ vocabulary
• To enable students to develop familiarity with the Indian accent and gain confidence in spoken English
• To strengthen students’ writing skills
• To develop learning autonomy and learner interaction. (p. 62-63)

The expected outcome of the course was that the students would have developed some key skills in English, would be able to use them appropriately in different situations and would be able to cope with their academic studies, much of which require the use of English. This particular idea is especially relevant to my research as it provides a reliable solution to the many problems faced by students coming to Bangalore from different parts of the world. The main problem of not being able to comprehend the Indian accent can be resolved through a course like this.

In the course the following skills were taught in different modules- listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary. Different strategies were employed to make student comfortable with the components. Classroom sessions were first provided followed by lab hours or activity sessions providing students with the opportunity to interact with their peers and their teacher, thus, enabling them to practise what they learnt from the book.

For the listening skills- a passage or paragraph was read aloud and students were encouraged to listen to it keenly, following which they had to summarise its content in their own words.

For pronunciation a multi-media programme- *The Sky Pronunciation Suite* was used which was designed and created by Don Friend. Another interesting activity was that students were asked to listen to English songs and fill in certain blanks which contained words or phrases.

Culturally appropriate and relevant topics helped these Chinese students step out of their shells and begin to speak in the classroom. Role-play was an effective method to get reluctant students to participate in classroom activities. Having power point presentations also helped the students tremendously in being able to express themselves well.
A software program called *English Master* was used to help students with their writing skills. Most Chinese students seem not to have paid attention to the complexity of writing as it involves the criteria of coherence, cohesiveness, content and accuracy. Most English exercises and standardized examinations that these students faced in China were multiple choice questions and so they do not have adequate understanding or practice in writing. Several activities such as information gathering, presentations and library work helped enhance their writing skills.

Grammar and vocabulary were taught using the instructionist approach. The students found this method beneficial since they preferred using text books or printed worksheets for this module.

The author concludes that this 2-month course certainly helped Chinese students in India as they became more participative in class and began to enjoy their lessons. Since Chinese are very adept at using computers, they also enjoyed making power point presentations. The biggest challenge faced by the facilitators of this course was the writing dimension, since pedagogical and cultural factors constrain development in this area. This research project is pertinent to my research as it provides insights into the cultural dimension of a specific group of students. It is an eye-opener for English Language teachers as they understand the reasons for students’ difficulties in the classroom. This paper also provides a workable and practical solution to overcome problems in an English Language classroom.

### 2.3. CULTURE SHOCK AND ITS EFFECT ON LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Junzi Xia (2009) analyses the impact of culture shock on individual psychology. She sets out to identify reasons for culture shock and describes the negative impact of culture shock. She enumerated a number of solutions and evaluated the effectiveness of them. The main thrust of this paper is the psychological angle of culture shock. It is especially pertinent to the present research undertaken by me as I would like to examine the relationship between culture shock and language learning. The probability of learning a language successfully also depends on how well a learner can adapt psychologically to the foreign environment he is surrounded with. Ferraro’s (2006) claims that if one analyzes culture shock from a psychological viewpoint it is easier to understand the concept of culture shock.
Xia points out that the main reason for people to experience culture shock is the extent of difference between their own culture and the new one they are thrust into. In their attempt to adapt to different lifestyles, living conditions, cultural norms and behavior, they face an insurmountable task. In this condition feelings of alienation accumulate sharply and consequently culture shock occurs, followed by a series of psychological confusions and emotional discomfort (Hess, 1994). She advocates that maintaining a high degree of self-confidence and optimism is a key ingredient in overcoming the effects of culture shock. Furthermore, acceptance of the new culture as neither good nor bad, but just different will help students become more comfortable and minimize psychological stress. Finally, seeking social support will go a long way in dealing with the difficulties which arise from culture shock.

Sonja Manza from the University of Cooperative Education has described elaborately the causes, consequences and solutions for culture shock in her article about “The International Experience”, which focuses on culture shock experienced by professionals who go abroad on business assignments. She begins by attempting to describe the term culture, then by giving the definition of shock and then goes on to define culture shock according to Kalervo Oberg. The “U” curve hypothesis developed by Lysgaard is considered as rather simplistic by her. Problems arising from this are due to transferring research results to cultures other than the Anglo-American one and the unclear definition of the indicators. She also points out that not everyone goes through the four stages necessarily in the same order and not everyone experiences the effects of culture shock to the same degree. She reviews the model suggested by Elisabeth Marx, which is “not strictly linear but integrates a dynamic and repetitive cycle of positive and negative phases until you break through culture shock”. The other model looked at by her is the “W” curve which describes re-entry shock. On return to the home culture the expatriate experiences professional as well as personal challenges. Both physical as well as psychological symptoms accompany the phenomenon of culture shock and these could be severely debilitating to the sojourner. They tend to react in different ways to culture shock such as being passing, chauvinistic, marginal or mediating according to the four phases.

Manza also feels that culture shock is important for the adaptation process as it is the best and maybe even the only means to experience and understand foreign cultures. Rather than considering it as a debilitating phenomenon it should viewed as a constructive sign on the road to
international adaptation. The main factors that influence culture shock are cultural differences, individual differences and the sojourner’s experience. A sojourner’s personality plays an important role in the adaptation process as extraversion and sensitivity facilitate adjustment. Sojourner’s social networks are strongly influential as well. Making friends with host nationals indicates a degree of cross-cultural adaptation. Finally Manza suggests solutions to overcome culture shock by emphasizing the need for international human resources management and appropriate expatriate recruitment.

The article “Theory Reflections: Cultural Adaptation, Culture Shock and the “Curves of Adjustment” by Bruce La Brack critically appraises the “stages” models of Kalervo Oberg and Cora Du Bois.

Disciplines such as sociology, anthropology and international communication consider culture shock as a core concept. Although this is a valuable and viable theoretical tool, the “U” and “W” curves have failed to hold water over the years. In his article he traces the emergence of culture shock as a theoretical category and the development of “stages” models. He also enumerates researches that severely criticized the curves approach such as Colleen Ward, Stephen Bochner and Adrian Furnham in their book- The Psychology of Culture Shock.

Sandra Clyne explores the psychological factor in SLA of immigrant adults learning English. She reviews the factors of age- Critical Period Hypothesis put forth by Eric Lenneberg and Derek Bickerton which was later downplayed by Catherine snow and Hoefnagle- Hohle. She then discusses the theory of Affective Filter put forward by researcher Stephen Krashen in which the variables of anxiety, motivation and self-confidence may strongly enhance or inhibit SLA by playing a critical mediating role between the linguistic input available in the education setting and the students’ ability to learn. Another researcher referred to in the article is Alexander Guiora, whose research focuses on personality factors in SLA. He maintains that “second language learning in all of its aspects demands that the individual to a certain extent take on a new identity” (145), since identity is shaped by social interaction and communication language becomes central to the sense of self. Competence in communicating with others is a key ability central to the individual’s self esteem. Therefore it is extremely essential to bolster the student’s self-esteem.
John Schumann, an SLA researcher explores the concept of “language shock” wherein students are apprehensive of appearing comical or making a fool of oneself while attempting to communicate in a foreign language. According to Schumann, culture shock could also complicate the learning process of these students. Those suffering from culture shock could be identified by their reluctance to participate in classroom discussions or by their writing style that is somewhat terse and parrot-like.

Clyne also examines the issue of power with regard to English as a language. English is seen as the key to a rich and powerful post-industrial society, and unfortunately for the international student he views his own language as one that does not command the same amount of respect or awe. This seeming difference between the learner’s mother tongue and English may further compound the psychological problems that have already cropped up due to cultural differences. The problems arising out of culture shock such as anxiety, lack of motivation, loss of self-esteem, the question of identity etc. could probably be aggravated by this perception. To confront this situation Clyne suggests Jim Cummins’ reciprocal interaction model of education, which sees a network of meaningful oral and written communication among students and teachers as the matrix of learning.

According to Si Fan of the University of Tasmania, the significant differences in cultures and languages give rise to challenges and obstacles in both university mainstream lectures and language classrooms. She has undertaken a recent study which investigates the experiences of ten students who come from Asian backgrounds and their reaction to language shocks. These students from the University of Tasmania were undergoing the TESOL program in the faculty of education. In her paper the culture shock definition of Furnham and Bochner-1986, Oberg-1960, and Adler-1975 are mentioned. The main focus of her research is that since language and culture are closely related, linguistic differences lead to emotional distress which is also a part of culture shock. She feels that language shock is one of the less recognised aspects of culture shock.

She points out that 79% of Australia’s international students come from Asia. Due to the wide gap in the cultures and languages of Asian countries and Australia, these students are bound to experience language as well as culture shocks. These shocks are a significant barrier to the way of success in intercultural contact. She suggests that one of the reasons which lead to culture
shock is the degree of difference. She mentions the similarity-attraction hypotheses wherein people communicate easily with those who share similar salient characteristics with themselves such as values, age, interests, religion and most importantly language (Byrne 1969). Naturally, it follows then, that when an individual enters an environment that is alien to his, in every aspect, he is bound to be affected by the differences and this results in culture shock.

Fan reviews the stages of culture shock as brought out by researchers –Lysgaard (1955), Adler (1975. Although they are called by different names the basic pattern remains the same and is compliant with Lysgaard’s U-curve theory. She then moves on to the aspect of language which greatly influences the intercultural competence of international students. Nida (2003) debates that factors such as entities, events, states, processes and characteristics of one culture has a strong influence on the content of the language spoken in that culture. The theory that languages do affect its users’ world views and mental activities is named linguistic relativity by researchers like Kramsch (1998).

The study undertaken by Fan involved the participation of ten students who came from Korea, Malaysia, China and Vietnam. They were both learners and teachers of English as they were studying in the TESOL program and had had experiences in teaching English in ESL (English as a Second Language) classrooms. The methodology of the research was focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. The interview was guided by a set of eight questions. One hour focus group discussions were also held which were led by a given topic. The data thus collected were analyzed and it resulted in the construction of 5 categories, namely:

1. Experiences about language shock.
2. Effects of language shocks on learning English language.
3. Relationship between language shock and culture shock.
4. Concerns about language shock.
5. Understandings about language shock.
The research findings show that students were mostly affected by linguistic differences. Articles, plural nouns, tenses, prepositions and pronunciation were the aspects that threw up the maximum challenge for the students.

Asian students found another aspect equally challenging - that of Linguistic etiquette. Negative experiences about language impoliteness emerged as a dominant theme and this indicates that Asian students experience various forms of racism due to their appearance and their lack of fluency in the English language.

In the second category - effects of language shock on English language learning, all ten students agreed that language shock has a negative influence on people’s views and attitudes towards learning English language. People tend to feel disoriented and disengaged because of the confusion and misunderstanding caused by language shock. This would lead students to feel depressed, frustrated and embarrassed, resulting in a reduction in their passion to learn. However, a few students felt that there could be a positive side to language shocks as it gives them an opportunity to explore the language.

Relationship between language shock and culture shock which was the third category threw up the idea that these two were closely related. The students were of the opinion that language and culture are embedded in each other and affect each other. They felt that all languages are influenced by the culture in which they are spoken and languages in turn shape cultures. Therefore, learning a language can enhance a person’s understanding of that particular culture and inculcate a sense of belonging.

The fourth theme that emerged from the discussion was students’ concerns about language shock. Students expressed their ideas about the duration it took for them to overcome language shock. They also put across a lack of confidence rising from language shock and the solution they came up with is to seek support from peer group, social networking or from authoritative figures.

The last category that appeared was understandings about language shock. There was a consensus about what they considered language shock. They felt that it is a shock caused by language and culture differences and it is closely related to culture shock. An interesting idea that came up was that language shock could even occur within the same language systems.
Generation gap could be a reason for such a phenomenon. One of the students, however, explained that “A language shock refers to the fact that some terms and expressions in one language are different from one another, and they cannot be understood by foreigners who come from other language and cultural backgrounds. For example, I can’t understand some English slangs and proverbs, and I don’t get the exact meanings of some terms, even though I have caught every single word said by the other person.”

Fan concludes that the experiences given by the students prove the theories constructed by researchers like Chesterman 1998, and James 1980. From a linguistic aspect ESL students’ first languages tend to interfere with their target language learning. Socio-linguistically speaking students were shocked at the way local people greet, compliment and criticise. The other significant finding of this research was that language shock follows a pattern similar to that of culture shock. Having lived in Australia for a period of two years four of the six students found it slightly easier to use the English language unlike six of them who had been in the new country for less than a year. They were still grappling with the changes that come with the new language. This points out to the fact that obtaining help and support from teachers and peers was imperative for students to emerge from the psychological stress of culture shock. The effect of language shocks too would be obliterated by garnering this kind of support and encouragement.

PERSONALITY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Personality has a bearing on language learning and this is shown in the way personality types can influence students in developing different learning styles for themselves. Ismail Erton (2010) found that personality traits and learning styles of an individual are significantly related in the context of second or foreign language learning. Researchers such as Murray and Mount, 1996- studied the effect of an individual’s personality on his ability to acquire language.

Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham (2003) conducted a study of two British University samples in order to investigate the relationship between personality traits and academic performance. It was found that they were significantly related.
A study similar to mine was carried out by Biggs in 1987 and 1993 where he put forward six learning styles and grouped them in three different approaches- surface, deep and achieving. The similarity between Biggs’ and my study is that he included a motivation effect and a related study strategy for the individual. Biggs’ study found that identification of the learning approaches is helpful in identifying the learning styles of the individual in different learning environments. The main reason for studying learning styles is to develop teaching methodologies to adapt to the various learning styles found in the classroom.

The subjects of this study were 102 freshman students at Bilkent University studying under various faculty such as engineering, Fine Arts, Business Administration, Economics, Education and Humanities and Letters. These students had undergone preparatory English courses before joining their respective departments.

The students were administered two inventories and data were collected from these- Maudsley Personality Inventory and Jeffrey Barsch Learning Styles Inventory. The variables were as follows – Faculty, success, Personality and Language Learning Styles. Data analysis was done using SPSS v.11.5.

The researcher presented the results according to each variable and percentages were recorded. The contrastive t-test analysis showed that there was no statistical relationship between the success of the introvert and extrovert students who have the visual learning style. The same was the case for students who have the auditory as well as the tactile learning styles.

The results for the difference between the success of the introvert and extrovert students who have the visual vs. auditory styles in terms of success in foreign language learning was found to be statistically insignificant. The visual vs. tactile learning styles also threw up the same results, so also for auditory vs. tactile learning styles. From the above it can be concluded that learning styles do not make much difference to achieve success in foreign language education. This is an interesting observation since the research undertaken by me examines the influence on the big five personality types-extroversion, agreeableness, emotional stability, conscientiousness and openness- on language learning. Even in my research it was found that personality does not have a statistical relationship with regard to language learning when compared to the effect culture shock has on language achievement. The TIPI- Ten Item Personality Inventory was part of the questionnaire and it aimed to identify the personality type of the respondent. This was compared
with the score received by the student on ten questions about culture shock that they experienced in India. It was found that there was no significant statistical relationship between the variables.

2.4.MOTIVATION AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

Motivation as a factor which influences language learning has been extensively studied by many scholars such as Gardner (1983; 1985), Dornyei (1990; 1994; 1997; 2001 a,b), Williams (1994), Dornyei & Csizer (1998), Burden (2004), Stott (2004) and many others. The most recent research study by Bahous et al (2011) was carried out on L1 Arabic speakers in the Lebanese context. The aim of this study was to present recurrent problems faced by these students in English for Academic Purposes Classroom. The authors identified some issues related to motivation in the classroom. One was clarity of purpose. More than academic purposes it is important for students to realize that using the target language is mainly for effective communication. When students see the practical uses of studying English they are definitely more motivated to learn.

Anderson, Hiebert, Scott & Wilkinson (1985) found that motivation is a major concern in improving reading and thereby fostering literacy. It is also important for students to have had positive language learning experiences in the L2 classroom, since research shows that this impacts the students’ confidence in using it. Consequently, motivation to use the language also increases.

Burden (2004) found that a favourable attitude would motivate learners to reach their learning goals. An important study undertaken by Gardner et al(2004) showed that affective factors such as language attitude, motivation and anxiety influence language acquisition and achievement. The researchers conclude that the teacher and the classroom environment have a tremendous influence on the way students attitudes are shaped. The suggestion put forward by the researchers was learner’s states of mind that could be detrimental to learning could be addressed by conceptualizing certain strategies that were specific to certain situations. This would help students reduce anxiety develop confidence and also increase the level of their motivation.
Teaching strategies do play a vital role in students’ motivation whether it is cooperative group learning (Ghaith, 2003) or the use of technology (Al-Jarf, 2004; Ramachaudran, 2004), new methods shift the focus from teacher centric to learner centric classrooms. Learning styles are related to motivation as is shown in Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, 1983) as well as in Dornyei & Skehan’s research (2003).

Writing instruction and feedback were found to be problematic to students in the L2 classroom. Harklau (2002) feels that a student should learn a second language through writing and that it was not enough for a learner to just know how to write (p.36)

Essay writing posed the greatest problem for most students as they were unable to understand the form. Teachers expect their students to change to more sophisticated essay writing and students report difficulties in doing so (Campbell, Smith & Brooker, 1998; Norton, 1990; Prosser & Webb, 1994).

The difference between using technology and traditional methods of teaching from the textbook in teaching and learning writing skills for college students was studied by Al-Jarf (2004). The researcher studied two groups which were involved in the traditional method of instruction, however, one of the groups was instructed to make extensive use of the computer and internet to check their homework and assignments. It was found that the experimental group definitely scored higher marks and gained in writing achievement. The other aspects that they showed significant improvement is in self-esteem, motivation and a sense of pride in their achievement . Using rewards to motivate students to read is a suggestion given by Schunk (1983). Programs such as “Earning by Learning”- (EBL) is a national program that helps those students who do not achieve high grades in academics to read by rewarding them with cash and adult attention. Researchers like Oldfather (1995), Terrel and Rundulic (1996) argue that rewarding students with extrinsic means is justified since it improved their self-esteem and increased their confidence.

The aim of the research conducted by Bahous et al was to find out the views of the teachers & students of what hinder students’ language learning in the English language classroom in engaging actively in class discussions, critical thinking and producing academic writing.

The study was conducted on thirty students attending the different English language courses in the English as Foreign Language (EFL) Program at the university. The methodology
of research was face to face interviews and the subjects of the study were students between the ages of 18 and 21. Semi-structured questionnaires were sent by e-mail to the English language teachers in the EFL program. The data were analyzed using qualitative methods and consistent patterns in the various perspectives were revealed.

As far as purpose of language classes were concerned, there seemed to be no consensus as to the need for such classes. Most students felt that English courses should be obligatory; some felt that they should be made optional and only one student felt that there was no need for such classes. Where content was concerned, teachers felt that a relaxed atmosphere in the class would surely aid faster learning. As for skills such as reading, writing and grammar teachers unanimously agreed that there were problems that hindered students’ progress in the English classroom. Teachers blamed this on low motivation of the students and learners felt this was so because there was too much of an emphasis on writing. They also complained that teachers failed to make the courses interesting. The authors give the following suggestions:

“One way is providing scaffolding to benefit language learners especially in writing (Lavelle & Zuercher, 2001). It seems that the courses do not take into consideration the background of the students: some come from French or Arabic medium pre-university classes while others from different cultural environments and even different countries. There is a clear need for selecting content that is more relevant to the learners’ lives (Stott, 2004; Udvari- Solner, 1996) and also on an international level.”

(p.39)

The implication of this study is that it suggests changes at the curriculum stage. English language classes should be reorganized with appropriate emphasis on language skills. Teachers also could be trained in various teaching strategies such as catering to students’ learning styles, using technology in language classes, integrating all language skills and teaching language across the curriculum.

Motivation is considered as a ‘tool’ and it is by sharpening this tool that students can be successful in their academic and professional lives. On the other hand, demotivation impedes language learning and hence leads to unsuccessful mastery of English language proficiency. A research undertaken by Rou-Jui Sophia Hu reflects this aspect of language learning. She looks at eight negative factors like punishments, poor classroom management etc. which lead to demotivation.
The definition of demotivation is given by Dornyei (2001,b): “Demotivation” concerns specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioral intention or an ongoing action. A “demotivated” learner is someone who was once motivated but has lost his or her commitment/interest for some reason (p.89).

Research done by Gorham and Christopher (1992) determined the factors that demotivate college students in their communicative classes. 79% of all responses squarely placed the blame on the teachers’ shoulders. This result was corroborated by repeating the same experiment in 1995 and it was found that the results were the same as the previous one. This showed that teachers were more likely to blame their failure on the fact that students weren’t sufficiently motivated. On the other hand students blamed their own demotivation on the lack of enthusiasm, motivation, liveliness of the teacher. The subjects of the study were 241 male and 221 female students. All of them were freshman students from a technological university in Southern Taiwan. They were administered a questionnaire comprising thirty five questions. The subjects’ English language proficiency was adopted from the GEPT - General English Proficiency test, one of the most accessible and widely used language proficiency tests in Taiwan (commissioned by the Taiwan Ministry of Education, 1999, and administered by the national Language Training and Testing Centre since 2001) (p.89).

Pearson’s product-moment correlation co-efficient were used to assess the relationship between thirty de-motivated statements and students’ English language proficiency. Stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to find the most significant predictor variables within each criterion variable.

The findings of this study provided a deeper understanding of how demotivation can affect learning among Taiwanese Technological Institute students. The following factors were found to reduce motivation levels: Insufficient vocabulary size, language-specific anxiety, bad grammar translation and poor listening comprehension. These factors could be worked on by the students but for factors such as monotonous teaching, punishment and poor teacher-student relationship, it is apparent that teachers are solely responsible for them. It is the responsibility of the teacher in an English language classroom or any other classroom for that matter to provide an environment that is completely free of any kind of anxiety or tension.
2.5. Book Reviews

*Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*

Richards and Rogers

This section traces the development of various theories and practices in English language teaching over the century. It is particularly useful for teachers of English language to know the diverse approaches that worked and did not work over the years and what method suited which situation.

Language teaching as a profession gained ground in the early twentieth century. But the concept is not a new one as seen in the study of classical languages like Greek and Latin. Grammar schools in the sixteenth and seventeenth century taught grammar through the rote method of learning. Translations were done with the use of parallel linguistic texts and dialogue. Once students gained proficiency with basic rules they were introduced to the advanced study of grammar and rhetoric. Lapses in knowledge were often dealt with in a very stringent manner often with brutal punishment. Such a method surely could not have been popular as learning for children in such schools must have had a deadening effect. This lead to a decline in the learning and teaching of Latin but the methodology persisted.

With the advent of modern languages the teaching methodology of learning grammar rules by heart cast its shadow on the new languages. Learning to communicate in the target
language was not the main objective. Abstract rules of grammar and translation of disconnected sentences was the order of the day. The same applied to the study of foreign languages. This was the Grammar Translation Method and it dominated language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s.

Towards the mid-nineteenth the Grammar Translation Method was rejected as it did not fulfill the objective of learning a foreign language, although it was easy on the teacher, the student was often frustrated and developed a disenchantment with language learning.

The next method which took shape gradually was the Structural method wherein learners were taught the most basic structural patterns which occurred in the language. The Frenchman F. Gouin, a well-known reformer of the mid-nineteenth century used situations and themes as ways of organizing and presenting oral language. He also used gestures and actions to convey the meanings of utterances.

By the 1880s English language teaching began to take on a scientific approach. The discipline of linguistics was revitalized. Many practical-minded linguists such as Henry Sweet in England, Wilhelm Vietor in Germany and Paul Passy in France reformed the ideas of ELT which resulted in the establishing of a new science- Phonetics- the scientific analysis and description of the sound systems of languages. The proponents of Linguistics emphasized that speech and not so much the written word was the primary form of language.

The foundation of The International Phonetic Association took place in 1886, and its International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was designed in such a manner that the sounds of any language could be accurately transcribed. This lead to emphasis on the spoken language wherein phonetic training was provided to inculcate good pronunciation habits. An inductive approach to grammar was adopted, phrases and idioms were taught through conversation texts and dialogues and vocabulary was taught through establishing associations with the target language and not the native language. Even before students were introduced to the written language it was important for them to hear it. Words should not be taught in isolation. They must be presented in the context of sentences and so also sentences be placed in the relevant context.
Gradually this lead to a formation of principles on the study of language. Henry Sweet in his book *The Practical Study of Language* put down principles for developing a teaching methodology.

As yet, these ideas had not attained the status of a method. But they pointed towards the formulation of implementable design for teaching a language. At the same time a new vein of interest was emerging to develop principles for language teaching out of naturalistic principles which are similar to the principles seen in first language acquisition. This ultimately led to what has come to be called the **Direct Method**.

The supporters of this method of teaching believed that language could be taught without translation or the use of the learner’s native language if meaning was conveyed directly through demonstration and action. A monolingual approach to teaching was inculcated wherein teachers encouraged direct and spontaneous use of the target language in the classroom. Grammar would be taught inductively and only in the later stages. The textbook was replaced by the teacher in the early stages of learning. Pronunciation was emphasized during speaking and vocabulary was taught using known words, mime, demonstration and pictures. Such natural principles of language learning came to be known as the Direct Method.

Although this method was considered to be extremely successful, it was not without its drawbacks. It seemed to work in elite private schools where students paid a hefty sum of money as tuition fee and therefore were motivated to learn the language. Whereas, in public schools there seemed to be a sense of frustration since the teacher would go to great lengths to explain a simple word or concept using the Direct Method- which meant that the native language could not be used. The goal of comprehending the meaning of such a word or concept may have been achieved with the use of simple translation into the native language. Therefore this method saw a decline in noncommercial schools by the 1920s.

A study which began in America in 1923 came to the conclusion that no single method could be successful in itself. Teaching only conversation skills was not considered feasible due to the constraint of time, lack of expertise of teachers and the irrelevance of conversation skills in a foreign language. What seemed more important was a reading knowledge of the target
language, achieved through the gradual introduction of words and grammatical structures in simple reading texts.

With the entry of America into World War II language teaching took a significant turn. The U.S government needed personnel who were fluent in several European as well as South-east Asian languages and therefore it was necessary to set up a special language training program. The government then came up with the Army specialized Training Program. The main objective of this program was to enable students to attain proficiency in conversation skills in a variety of foreign languages. Linguists such as Leonard Bloomfield at Yale had already developed training programs as part of their linguistic research that were designed to give linguists and anthropologists mastery of Native American and other languages they were studying.

They developed the technique on their own and did not depend on textbooks to teach this method. This technique was also known as the “informant method” as it used a native speaker of the language—the informant — who served as a source of phrases and vocabulary and who provided sentences for imitation, and a linguist, who supervised the learning experience.

The Army Method just like the Direct Method depended on the intensity of contact with the target language rather than any basis of methodology. This methodology proved the efficacy of an intensive oral based approach.

In 1939, the first English Language Institute in the United States was developed by the University of Michigan; The approach developed by linguists at Michigan and other universities became known variously as the Oral Approach, the Aural-Oral approach, and the Structural Approach. It advocated aural training first, then pronunciation training, followed by speaking, reading and writing. Language was identified with speech, and speech was approached through structure.

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) brought about a great change in the way language learning was viewed. Learning a language actually amounted to actually being able to communicate meaningfully in that language and this was the premise of this method. Hymes coined this term in order to contrast a communicative view of language and Chomsky’s theory of competence. It was Chomsky’s view that
Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitation, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors (random or characteristic) in applying his knowledge of the language in actual performance. (Chomsky 1965: 3)

Another theory of communication favorably looked upon is Halliday’s functional account of language use. He postulated that language serves seven basic functions. Children use language to fulfill certain needs such as hunger, being rid of physical discomfort, to interact with other members of their family, sometimes even to obtain control over others. The power of language is also seen in their ability to create a world of their own in the realm of imagination.

The exponents of CLT were of the opinion that learning a second language was similar to acquiring the linguistic means to perform different kinds of functions.

A more pedagogically influential analysis of this theory is propounded by Canale and Swain (1980), in which four dimensions of communicative competence are identified: Grammatical competence which is what Chomsky refers to as linguistic competence and what Hymes intends by what is “formally possible”. When an individual is said to have Sociolinguistic competence it means that he has a working knowledge of the social context in which communication takes place. He is also able to identify with role relationships, the shared information of the participants, and the communicative purpose of their interaction. When one is able to successfully interpret the elements of a message according to how it is connected to the text as a whole and its representation in part, he is said to have attained discourse competence. In specific situations if an individual uses language in its communicative context for higher level navigation such as initiation, termination, maintenance and redirection, he is said to have achieved Strategic competence.

The theory of learning behind this approach is that language learning is accelerated by activities that involve real communication. (Johnson 1982). The conclusion then is if the language that is used is meaningful and relevant to the user then the learning process is speeded up. Therefore, learning activities are selected according to how well they engage the learner in meaningful and authentic language use instead of merely mechanical practice of language patterns.
The Council of Europe developed a syllabus based on the model created by Wilkins in 1976 which included descriptions of the practical objectives of foreign language courses for European adults. This they felt would come of use in situations in which they might typically need to use a foreign language like travel, business etc., for personal communication such as identification, shopping etc., language functions such as requesting information, describing information and so on.

Situation Language Teaching and Audio-Lingualism had run their course by now and the world seemed to pave the way for the new method--Communicative Language Teaching. The proponents of CLT were those who felt a more humanistic approach to teaching would be, not only beneficial to learners but also much more workable. This method became popular very quickly owing to the fact that it received the nod from several expert linguist especially from the British super continent. The British Council also lent its weight to this method, thereby giving it its credentials. This also lead to the wide spread acceptance of this method. (Richards 1985).

A new philosophy of learning was proposed by Tracy Terrell, a teacher of Spanish in California. This approach grew out of his experiences and observations during his classes and it incorporated the “naturalistic” principles researchers had identified in studies of second language acquisition. He called it the Natural Method. This approach gained credence due to the support given by Krashen.

Krashen and Terrell make continuing reference to the theoretical and research base claimed to underlie the Natural Approach and to the fact that the method is unique in having such a base. “It is based on an empirically grounded theory of second language acquisition, which has been supported by a large number of scientific studies in a wide variety of language acquisition and learning contexts” (Krashen and Terrell 1983: 1).

The Natural Method is another term for what was earlier known as the Direct Method. It emphasized the fact that the underlying principles were the same as naturalistic language learning in young children. The difference is that the direct method places more emphasis on teacher monologues, direct repetition and formal questions and answers whereas the natural method propounds that there must be more exposure to the language helping the learner to
prepare himself for the output. The input at the beginning should be optimum and only then can one expect there to be sufficient output.

The natural method is for beginners and is designed to help them become intermediates. At the end of about 150 hours in this method will enable the student to “get around” in the target language and he will be able to communicate with a monolingual native speaker of the target language without difficulty: read most ordinary text with some use of a dictionary and know enough of the language to continue to improve on his own. However, he will not be able to pass for a native speaker or understand native speakers when they talk to each other. The syllabus is designed based on some typical goals for language learning such as basic personal oral and written communication and academic learning skills (oral and written).

**Cooperative learning** has antecedents in proposal for peer-tutoring and peer-monitoring that go back hundreds of years and longer. The early twentieth century U.S educator John Dewey is usually credited with promoting the idea of building cooperation in learning into regular classrooms on a regular and systematic basis (Rodgers 1988). The main aim of this method of learning was to

1. make sure that all students whether they were prodigies or poor in acquisition, they would all be made to achieve their full potential.

2. see that the teacher was instrumental in building healthy relationships among students and equip students with the tools required for all-round development

3. eliminate the competitive atmosphere of the classroom, giving rise to team work focused on better performance. (Johnson, Johnson, and Holubec 1994:2)

In second language teaching this method is often referred to as cooperative Language learning and this is seen to be a positive change as well as an up gradation of Communicative Language Teaching. It is largely a learner-centered approach and offers advantages over teacher-fronted classroom strategies.

In language teaching its goals are:
- To provide opportunities for naturalistic second language acquisition through the use of interactive pair and group activities

- To provide teachers with a methodology to enable them to achieve this goal and one that can be applied in a variety of curriculum settings (e.g., content-based, foreign language classrooms; mainstreaming)

- To enable focused attention to particular lexical items, language structures, and communicative functions through the use of interactive tasks

- To provide opportunities for learners to develop successful learning and communication strategies

- To enhance learner motivation and reduce learner stress and to create a positive affective classroom climate (Richard & Rogers: 193)

The theoretical work of developmental psychologists Jean Piaget (e.g., 1965) and Lev Vygotsky (e.g., 1962) forms the basis of this method of learning. They stress the central role of social interaction in learning. A central premise of CLL is that learner develop communicative competence in a language by conversing in socially or pedagogically structured situations. It seeks to develop learners’ critical thinking skills, which are seen as central to learning of any sort.

Since activities form the major teaching strategy of this method a particular language syllabus cannot be designed. What defines CLL is the systematic and carefully planned use of group-based procedures in teaching as an alternative to teacher-fronted teaching.

Johnson et al., (1994: 4-5) describe three types of cooperative learning groups.

1. Formal cooperative learning groups. These last from one class period to several weeks. These are established for a specific task and involve students working together to achieve shared learning goals.

2. Informal cooperative learning groups. These are ad-hoc groups that last from a few minutes to a class period and are used to focus student attention or to facilitate learning during direct teaching.
3. Cooperative base groups. These are long term, lasting for at least a year and consist of heterogeneous learning groups with stable membership whose primary purpose is to allow members to give each other the support, help, encouragement, and assistance they need to succeed academically.

The learner has to hone his teamwork skills and work collaboratively on tasks with other group. They are required to participate actively for this method to be successful. The teacher had a considerably different role from the traditional one of being the main instructor, the one who holds all the knowledge and skills and has to transfer it through the medium of lecturing or instructing. In the Cooperative Language Learning method, the teacher has the role of facilitator of learning. She must be tuned in to the needs of her class and give guidance and help as and when the need arises.

In the class the teacher not only instructs but caters to all learning needs of her students such as clarifying doubts, eliciting responses, explaining at length, supporting views, interacting personally with them and so on.

(Harel 1992: 169)

The efficacy of this method has been proven as it has been extensively researched and evaluated and research findings are generally supportive. However, the drawback one can find in this method is that it may not be accommodative of learners with different proficiency levels, suggesting that some groups of students may obtain more benefits from it than others.

The next approach that came up was Content-Based Instruction. In this method language teaching focused on the information that the students needed to acquire and not so much on the linguistic competence. The actual syllabus took a backseat and acquiring important content became the central objective.

Krahmke offers the following definition:

It is the teaching of content or information in the language being learned with little or no direct or explicit effort to teach the language itself separately from the content being taught. (Krahmke, 1987: 65)
This approach is grounded on the following two main principles:

1. When people are forced to learn a language for its own sake or as an end in itself they are not as successful as learning it to acquire information. This way the focus is not so much on the accuracy of what they are learning as much as on the actual completion of the task at hand. This principle reflects one of the motivations for CBI noted earlier- that it lends to more effective language learning.

2. Content-Based Instruction better reflects learners’ needs for learning a second language. This principle reflects the fact that many content-based programs serve to prepare ESL students for academic studies or for mainstreaming: therefore, the need to be able to access the content of academic learning and teaching as quickly as possible, as well as the processes through which such leaning and teaching are realized, are a central priority. (Richards & Rogers : 207)

Language learning is typically considered incidental to the learning of content. And it follows that the syllabus content will be derived from the content area, and these obviously very widely in detail and format.

The learner needs to become autonomous so that he can come to understand his own learning process and take charge of it from the very start. This is the “learning by doing” school of pedagogy. Sometimes participation by the learners turn them into sources of content and this has been found to be highly motivating and has resulted in a course changing its direction in order to better meet the needs of students” (Stryker and Leaver1993: 11)

This method foresees a sea change in the role of language teachers. They must be much more than language teachers. They must have extensive knowledge in the subject matter and they must be able to elicit that knowledge from their students. They have to plan their lessons in such a way that context and comprehensibility are their foremost concerns. They also become responsible for selecting authentic materials for use in class, and thereby become in a sense, student needs analysts. They have to create truly-learner-centered classrooms.

Stryker and Leaver suggest the following essential skills for any CBI instructor:

4 Varying the format of classroom instruction
5 Using group work and team-building techniques
6 Organizing jigsaw reading arrangements
7 Defining the background knowledge and language skills required for student success
8 Helping students develop coping strategies
9 Using process approaches to writing
10 Using appropriate error correction techniques
11 Developing and maintaining high levels of student esteem

(Stryker and Leaver 1993: 293)

Some issues should be addressed in Content-Based Instruction as it places certain demands on teachers who are involved in regular ESL teaching. Briton et al. (1989) identify the following:

- Are adequately trained instructors available to teach the selected courses?
- Will there be any incentives offered to instructors who volunteer to teach in the proposed program (e.g., salary increases, release time, small class sizes)?
- How will faculty not willing or qualified to participate in the new program be reassigned?
- How will teachers and other support staff be oriented to the mode (e.g., pre-service, in-service)?
- What is the balance of language and content teaching (i.e., focus on content teaching, focus on language teaching, equal attention to both)?
- What are the roles of the teacher (e.g., facilitator, content-area expert, language expert)?
- What is the anticipated workload (e.g., contact hours, curriculum duties)?
- Who is responsible for selecting the teaching materials?
- Are teachers expected to develop content-specific, language teaching materials? If yes, will materials development training and guidelines be provided?
- Will alternate staffing configurations (e.g., curriculum and materials specialists’ team teaching be used?

Content-Based Instruction is a major challenge as it involves copious amounts of time and energy in preparing and executing the instructions. The teacher must be highly motivated and so also the participating individuals for this method to be a successful one.

**Task-Based Language Teaching**

The logical development of Communicative Language Teaching has been the method of Task-Based Language Teaching. This method used tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in its curriculum. Certain principles govern this way of teaching and they are

- Activities that involve real communication are essential for language learning.
- Activities in which language is used for carrying our meaningful tasks promote learning.
- Language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process.

Tasks are considered as useful modes for applying these principles. This method proposed the notion of “task” as a central unit of planning and teaching. There is no classified definition of task but one can take to understand that a task is an activity or goal that is carried out using language such as finding a solution to a puzzle, assembling a simple machine, answering or making a telephone call and so on.

There are different views as to what constitutes a task and therefore there are several descriptions of basic task types that can be used in Task-Based Language Teaching.

In order to form a basis for task design and description, several attempts have been made to categorize tasks. There are six basic task types built on more or less traditional knowledge hierarchies. They are:

12 Listing
13 Ordering and sorting
14 Comparing
Problem solving

Sharing personal experiences

Creative tasks

Pica Kanagy, and Faldoun (1993) classify tasks according to the type of interaction that occurs in task accomplishment and give the following classification:

1. **Jigsaw tasks**: These involve learners combining different pieces of information to form a whole (e.g., three individuals or groups may have three different parts of a story and have to piece the story together).

2. **Information-gap tasks**: One student or group of students has one set of information and another student or group has a complementary set of information. They must negotiate and find out what the other party’s information is in order to complete an activity.

3. **Problem-solving tasks**: Students are given a problem and a set of information. They must arrive at a solution of the outcome.

4. **Decision-making tasks**: Students are given a problem for which there are a number of possible outcomes and they must choose one through negotiation and discussion.

5. **Opinion exchange tasks**: Learners engage in discussion and exchange of ideas. They do not need to reach an agreement.

Tasks also have dual characteristics such as being one way or two ways- involving exchange of information. They could be convergent or divergent i.e., whether the students achieve a common goal or several different goals. The students may also collaborate or compete with each other to carry out a certain task. The outcome of the task may be single or multiple. Sometimes the task may require concrete language and at other times abstract language. The tasks may also be set either in real world situations or is a pedagogical activity not found in the real world.

The exponents of the Task-Based Instruction method support the use of authentic tasks backed up by authentic materials wherever possible. Popular media provide a wide source of resource materials and some of the following tasks can be built around such media products.

*Newspapers.*
- Students examine a newspaper, determine its sections, and suggest three new sections that might go in the newspaper.
- Students prepare their weekend entertainment plan using the entertainment section.
- Students prepare a job-wanted ad using examples from the classified section.

**Television**

- Students take notes during the weather report and prepare a map with weather symbols showing likely weather for the predicted period.
- In watching an infomercial, students identify and list “hype” words and then try to construct a parallel ad following the sequence of the hype words.
- After watching an episode of an unknown soap opera, students list the characters (with known or made-up names) and their possible relationship to other characters in the episode.

**Internet**

- Given a book title to be acquired, students conduct a comparative shopping analysis of three Internet booksellers, listing prices, mailing times, and shipping charges, and choose a vendor, justifying their choice.
- Seeking to find an inexpensive hotel in Tokyo, students search with three different search engines (e.g., Yahoo, Netscape, Google), comparing search times and analyzing the first ten hits to determine most useful search engine for their purpose.
- Students initiate a “chat” in a chat room. Indicating a current interest in their life and developing an answer to the first three people to respond. They then start a diary with these text-sets, ranking the responses.

The key assumptions of task-based instruction are summarized by Frez (1998:17) as:

- The focus is on process rather than product.
- Basic elements are purposeful activities and tasks that emphasize communication and meaning.
- Learners learn language by interacting communicatively and purposefully while engaged in the activities and tasks.

- Activities and tasks can be either:

- Those that learners might need to achieve in real life;

- Those that have a pedagogical purpose specific to the classroom.

- Activities and tasks of a task-based syllabus are sequenced according to difficulty.

- The difficulty of a task depends on a range of factors including the previous experience of the learner, the complexity of the task, the language required to undertake the task, and the degree of support available.

One of the most effective techniques used in language teaching is role-play and it has been used extensively in the task-based language teaching method. In order for this to be effective there are several pre-task and post-task activities. The format may be described as follows:

**Pre-task**

1. Learners first take part in a preliminary activity that introduces the topic, the situation, and the “script” that will subsequently appear in the role-play task. Such activities are of various kinds, including brain-storming, ranking exercises and problem-solving tasks. The focus is on thinking about a topic, generating vocabulary and relaxed language, and developing expectations about the topic. This activity therefore prepares learners for the role-play task by establishing schemata of different kinds.

2. Learners then read a dialogue on a related topic. This serves both to model the kind of transaction the learner will have to perform in the role-play task and to provide examples of the kind of language that could be used to carry out such a transaction.

The actual task involves the role play which the students perform. They may work in pairs or in groups of 3-4. They may also use cues needed to negotiate the task.

**Post-task**
3. Learners then listen to recordings of native speakers performing the same role-play task they have just performed and compare differences between the way they expressed particular functions and meanings and the way native speakers performed.

One cannot deny the pedagogical value of using tasks as a vehicle for communication authentic language use in second language classrooms. Tasks have long been part of techniques used by teachers in language classes but TBLT emphasizes the dependence on tasks as the primary source of pedagogical input in teaching and the absence of a systematic grammatical other type of syllabus that distinguishes it from other methods.

**An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition**

Muriel-Saville Troike

In contemporary theory of language learning and teaching it is imperative that the identity of the learner be taken into account as it addresses the ways in which he understands his relationship to the social world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space and how the learner understands possibilities for the future.

The conditions under which language learners speak read or write the second language never remain static. They are subject to change influenced by relations of power in different sites: learners who may not be valued in one site may be esteemed in another. The identity of the language learner is construed as being multiple, a site of struggle and subject to change. For this reason, every time learners interact in the target language they are engaged in identity construction and negotiation. Although the conditions of language learning are dynamic, social contexts and structural conditions cannot be determined. Through human agency, learners who speak from the identity of their mother tongue struggle to reframe their relationship with their interlocutors and claim alternative, more powerful identities from which to speak, thereby enhancing language learning.
The relationship between identity and language learning can essentially be found in the psycholinguistic approach to Second Language Acquisition. This means that this study will include a greater focus on sociological and cultural dimension of language learning.

Second Language acquisition (SLA) is defined as the study of a language other than the mother tongue of the learner. Although the language that is being learnt may be his third or even fourth, it is referred to as second language. It is also commonly called target language (TL), which refers to any language that is the main aim or goal of learning and in this study it is English that will be considered as the second language.

There are several approaches to the study of Second Language Acquisition and they can be broadly classified under these three categories by which they are influenced:

1. Linguistic
2. Psychological
3. Socio-cultural

The linguistics of Second Language Acquisition

Most linguists agree that all naturally occurring languages share some common characteristics such as:

1. Languages are systematic. They contain elements which are recurrent and there are regular patterns of relationship that occur among them. All languages have an infinite number of sentences and the probability of the number of creative sentences that can be constructed in any particular language is infinite.

2. Languages are symbolic. The meaning of words and their symbolic representation in writing are arbitrary. The sequence of sounds or letters does not possess any meaning. The meaning is arrived at by a tacit agreement by a group of speakers of the same language.

3. Languages are social. Language is learnt only when there is interaction among members of a society, never in isolation. Although every human being has the inherent capacity to learn
a language it cannot be achieved without interaction with others. We use language to communicate, to categorize and catalogue the objects, events, and processes of human experience. We might well define language at least in part as “the expressive dimension of culture”

There are different levels at which a language is learned and linguists traditionally divide a language into these levels for description and analysis. When one considers the areas of knowledge which every L1 or L2 learner must acquire at these different levels, it strikes one as quite remarkable.

1. Lexicon (vocabulary)
   - Word meaning’
   - Pronunciation and spelling for written languages
   - Grammatical category (part of speech)
   - Possible occurrence in combination with other words and in idioms

2. Phonology (sound system)
   - Speech sounds that make a difference in meaning (phonemes)
   - Possible sequences of consonants and vowels (syllable structure)
   - Intonation patterns (stress, pitch and duration)
   - Rhythmic patterns

3. Morphology (word structure)
   - Parts of words that have meaning (morphemes)
   - Inflections that carry grammatical information (like number or tense)
   - Prefixes and suffixes that may be added to change the meaning of words or their grammatical category

4. Syntax (grammar)
• Word order
• Agreement between sentence elements (subject-verb)
• Ways to form questions, to negate assertions, and to focus or structure information within sentences

5. Discourse
• Ways to connect sentences, and to organize information across sentence boundaries
• Structures for telling stories, engaging in conversations, etc.
• Scripts for interacting and for events.

Learning language at these levels occurs automatically to children in their L1 and it seems to happen with no apparent effort. Whereas, a similar competency in the L2 is seldom achieved even though the learner may spend much more time and effort in learning it.

Several approaches have emerged since the 1960s with regard to SLA as a field of systematic study. The earliest of them is Contrastive Analysis and this is important as these procedures are still incorporated in more recent approaches. CA introduced a major line of thought in SLA research: the influence of L1 on L2.

**Contrastive Analysis**

This approach involves predicting and explaining learner problems based on a comparison of L1 to L2 to determine similarities and differences. Robert Lado, an exemplary applied linguist sought to discover the problems that foreign language students would encounter in the learning process. His seminal book *Linguistics Across Cultures* (1957) became a classic guide to this approach.

Based on structural linguistics the focus of CA is on the surface forms of both L1 and L2 systems and on comparing one level at a time beginning with phonology of the L1 and L2, moving on to morphology, then syntax and gradually tapering off with lexicon and finally discourse. There is more emphasis on the lower levels than on lexicon and discourse.
Early exponents of behaviorist psychology assumed that language acquisition involves habit formation in a process of Stimulus-Response-Reinforcement (S-R-R). The first step is that the learner is exposed to stimulus that is linguistic input to which he responds. Reinforcement in terms of imitation and repetition reinforces and strengthens the response and therefore learning occurs. The implication is that “practice makes perfect”.

Another assumption of this theory is that there is transfer in learning, i.e. elements of the L1 which are similar to the elements in the target language make learning easier. This is called positive transfer. The transfer is called negative (or interference) when the L1 structure is used inappropriately in the L2.

The process of CA involves describing L1 and L2 at each level, analyzing roughly comparable segments of the languages for elements which are likely to cause problems for learners. This information provides a rationale for constructing language lessons that focus on structures which are predicted to most need attention and practice, and for sequencing the L2 structures in order of difficulty. (Saville-Troike :35)

The CA approach was not adequate for the study of SLA because the behaviorist learning theory to which it is related cannot explain the logical problem of language learning i.e. how learners know more than they have heard or have been taught. Moreover, CA analyses were not always validated by evidence from actual learner errors. Many of the L2 problems which are predicted by CA do not emerge; CA does not account for many learner errors; and much predicted positive transfer does not materialize.

Despite its limitations its analytic procedures have been usefully applied to descriptive studies and to translation, including computer translation. Further, there has been a more recent revival and revision of CA procedures, including contrasts of languages at more abstract levels and extension of the scope of analysis to domains of cross-cultural communication and rhetoric.

**Error Analysis**

This was the first approach in SLA in which there was an internal focus on the learners’ creative ability to construct language. Actual learner errors in L2 were described and analyzed rather than focusing on idealized linguistic structures attributed to native speakers of L1 and L2.
The most influential publication launching Error Analysis as an approach in SLA was S. Pit Corder’s (1967) article on “The significance of learners’ errors,” which calls on applied linguistics to focus on L2 learners’ errors not as ‘bad habits’ to be eradicated, but as sources of insight into the learning processes. Corder claimed that errors provide evidence of the system of language which a learner is using at any particular point in the course of L2 development, and of the strategies or procedures the learner is using in his “discovery of the language.” In a sense errors committed by learners give an insight into the learner’s mind. The learner language becomes the object of analysis which is potentially independent of L1 or L2 and the state of learner knowledge is seen as transitional competence on the path of SLA. Further, Corder claimed that the making of errors is significant because it is part of the learning process itself: “a way the learner has of testing his hypothesis about the nature of the language he is learning”.

The procedure for analyzing learner errors includes the following steps (Ellis 1994):

- Collection of a sample of learner language. Most samples of learner language which have been used in EA include data collected from many speakers who are responding to the same kind of task or test.

- Identification of errors. This first step in the analysis requires determination of elements in the sample of learner language which deviate from the target L2 in some way.

- Description of errors. For purposes of analysis, errors are usually classified according to language level (whether an error is phonological, morphological, syntactic, etc.), general linguistic category (e.g. auxiliary system, passive sentences, negative constructions), or more specific linguistic elements (e.g. articles, prepositions, verb forms)

- Explanation of errors. Accounting for why an error was made is the most important stop in trying to understand the processes of SLA. Two of the most likely causes are interlingual and intra lingual.

- Evaluation of errors. This step involves an analysis of how serious the error is and how it affects the one who is addressed. It also helps in understanding how it affects intelligibility and extent of social acceptability.
Although EA is a useful procedure it is not without shortcomings. There may be ambiguity in classification. Lack of positive data may lead to overemphasis on errors and no focus on what the learner has positively learnt. One may presume that a learner has learnt the target language well if there seems to be no errors, but this may be the result of avoidance of difficult structures.

**Universal Grammar**

Two concepts are central to the understanding of this method. The first is the distinction between the learner’s linguistic competence, or speaker-hearer’s underlying knowledge of language, from linguistic performance, or speaker-hearer’s actual use of language in specific instances. The second is that knowledge of language goes beyond what could be learned from the input that people receive.

One important issue in a UG approach to the study of SLA has been whether this innate resource is still available to individuals who are acquiring additional languages beyond the age of early childhood. Until the late 1970s, followers of this approach assumed that the language acquisition task involves children’s induction of a system of rules for particular language from the input they receive, guided by UG. A major change in thinking about the acquisition process occurred with Chomsky’s (1981) reconceptualization of UG in a Principles and Parameters framework, and with his subsequent introduction of the **Minimalist Program**.

The concept of Universal Grammar is a set of principles which are properties of all languages in the world. Some of these principles contain parameters or points where there is a limited choice of settings depending on which specific language is involved. What is acquired in L1 acquisition is not UG itself; UG is already present at birth as part of the innate language faculty in every human being, although maturation and experience are required for the manifestation of this capacity. Child acquisition of a specific language involves a process of selecting from among the limited parametric options in UG those that match the settings which are encountered in linguistic input.

The starting point (or initial state) for child L1 acquisition is thus UG, along with innate learning principles that are also “wired in” in the language faculty of the brain. What is acquired in the process of developing a specific language is information from input (especially
vocabulary) that the learner matches with UG options. The eventual product is the final state, or adult grammar.

While the question of why some learners are more successful than others is not relevant for basic L1 acquisition (since all children achieve a native “final state”), the question is highly relevant for SLA.

Other approaches followed in SLA have chosen to take an external focus on language learning. Within the framework of Functionalism there are four influential approaches. They are Systemic Linguistics -which is a model based on a model for analyzing language in terms of the inter-related systems of choices that are available for expressing meaning. The second is- Functional Typology, which is based on the comparative study of a wide range of the world’s languages. It involves the classification of languages and their features into categories or “types” – hence typology.

The third functional approach emphasizes function-to-form mapping in the acquisitional sequence. A basic concept from this perspective is that acquisition of both L1 and L2 involves a process of grammaticalization in which a grammatical function is first conveyed by shared extralinguistic knowledge and inferencing based on the context of discourse, then by a lexical word, and only later by a grammatical marker.

The fourth approach in the functional framework is Information organization. While all learners follow essentially the same principles in organizing their utterances, there is individual variation, in part attributable to how the principles apply in their L1 and influence interlanguage use, but as something like guiding forces whose interplay shapes the utterance.

In summarizing results, Klein and Perdue (1993: 261-66) offer four “bundles of explanations” for the sequence of acquisition they find, and for why some L2 learners are more successful than others:

- Communicative needs. Discourse tasks push the organization of utterances, in part to overcome communicative inadequacies.
- Cross-linguistic influence. Influence from L1 affects rate of interlanguage development and ultimate level of success, although not order of acquisition.
Extrinsic factors. Progress beyond the basic variety is dependent both on “propensity” factors such as attitudes and motivation, and on “environmental” factors such as extent and nature of learners’ exposure to L2. The everyday environment has more influence on progress at this level than does classroom learning.

Limits on processing. Learners’ current internalized inter language system must be ready to integrate new linguistic features or they cannot be put immediate use in communication. They cannot attend to all communicative needs at the same time.

Klein and Perdue conclude:

The emerging picture is one of a creative learner who does not try, item by item and as closely as possible, to replicate the various structural features of the input offered by the social environment, but rather draws on some of the material from the input and uses to construct his or her own language. This construction is permanently challenge- by the permanent influx of new input, on the one hand, and by various structural inadequacies, on the other. The extent to which the learner tackles these challenges, and the way n which it is done, depends on the particular learner and on the particular languages involved.

(1993: 38-39)

Different linguistic approaches have explored the basic questions about SLA with either an internal or an external focus of attention. Purely linguistic approaches, though, have largely excluded psychological and social factors. To gain an in-depth, “stereoscopic” understanding of L2 acquisition, we unquestionably need to view the process through more than one lens. That brings us to the several approaches to SLA that have been heavily influence by the field of psychology.

Psychology provides us with two major frameworks for the focus on learning processes: Information Processing (IP) and Connectionism.

Approaches based on IP are concerned with the mental processes involved in language learning and use. These include perception and the input of new information: the formation, organization, and regulation of internal representations: and retrieval and output strategies.
Our mental capacity requirements for controlled processing are obvious when we are beginning to learn a second language, as we need to concentrate our attention to comprehend or produce basic vocabulary and syntactic structures. It is only after these have been automatized that we can attend to more complex, higher-order features and content. We encounter similar capacity limitations (we easily experience “information overload”) in learning a new “language” for computerized word processing: we must initially use controlled processing to select appropriate symbols and apply the right rules, and it is difficult or impossible to simultaneously pay attention to higher-order content or creative processing. It is only after we have automatized the lower-level skills that our processing capacity is freed for higher-order thought.

Information Processing has three stages—input, central processing and output. **Input** for SLA is whatever sample of L2 that learners are exposed to, but it is not available for processing unless learner actually notice it; i.e. pay attention to it. Then it can become **intake. Output** for SLA is the language that learner produce, in speech, sign or in writing. **Central Processing** is the heart of this model, where learning occurs. It is here that learners go from controlled to automatic processing, where restructuring of knowledge takes place. It is possible to test for degree of automatization because controlled processing required more time.

Connectionist approaches to learning have much in common with IP perspectives, but they focus on the increasing strength of association between stimuli and responses rather than on the inferred abstraction of “rules” or on restructuring. Indeed, from a connectionist perspective learning essentially is change in the strength of these connections.

The best-known connectionist approach within SLA is **Parallel Distributed Processing**, or PDP. According to this viewpoint, processing takes place in a network of nodes (or units) in the brain that is connected by pathways. As learners are exposed to repeated patterns of units in inputs, they extract regularities in the patterns: probabilistic associations are formed and strengthened. These associations between nodes are called **connection strengths** or **patterns of activation.** The strength of the association changes with the frequency of input and nature of feedback.

**Differences in learners.** From a psychological perspective one can consider why some language learners are more successful than others. The focus, then will be on the learners
themselves and the factors that will be taken into consideration are- age, sex, aptitude, motivation, cognitive style, personality and learning strategies.

Age

It is commonly believed that children are more successful L2 learners than adults, but surprisingly the evidence for this is equivocal. The critical period hypothesis, as we have seen earlier does not really hold good as adult learners too have proved to be as successful at language learning as their younger counterparts.

Lenneberg (1967) speculated that the critical period applies to SLA as well as to first language acquisition. This can be seen in the fact that adult learner are unable to obtain native like pronunciation because they have crossed the age of the critical period.

While most would agree that younger learners achieve ultimately higher levels of L2 proficiency, evidence is just as convincing that adolescents and adults learn faster in initial stages. While brain “plasticity” is regarded as an advantage in younger learners, older learners have the advantage of greater learning capacity, a better memory for vocabulary as well as an enhanced analytical ability. On the other hand this might work to the advantage of younger learners. Not having analytical processes might help them develop native-like grammatical intuition. This means that in different learning environments learners of different ages are able to acquire language at different levels.

Sex

This factor of language acquisition has been discussed earlier in the project and the evidence shows that female learners perform better at verbal fluency tests and men at being organized with speech. Men appear to be better at computing compositional rules while women seem to better at memorizing complex grammatical forms. Other differences also have a role to play such as hormonal variables: higher androgen level correlates with better automatized skills, and high estrogen with better semantic/interpretive skills (Mack 1992).

Aptitude
The assumption that there is a talent which is specific to language learning has been widely held for many years. The following four components were proposed by Carroll (1965) as underlying this talent, and they constitute the bases for most aptitude tests:

- Phonemic coding ability: It is the capacity to process auditory input into segments which can be stored and retrieved.
- Inductive language learning ability and grammatical sensitivity: they are both concerned with central processing.
- Associative memory capacity is importantly concerned with how linguistic items are stored, and with how they are recalled and used in output.

The concept of language-learning aptitude is essentially a hypotheses that possessing various degrees of these abilities predicts correlated degrees of success in L2 acquisition.

**Motivation**

Motivation is a key factor in deciding the how much of progress a second language learner will make at different stages of their L2 development.

The most widely recognized types of motivation are integrative and instrumental. The definitions of these types of motivation is also given at the initial part of this project and it can be understood that a project of this nature would be incomplete without the consideration of motivation.

**Cognitive style**

Cognitive style refers to individuals’ preferred way of processing: i.e. of perceiving, conceptualizing, organizing, and recalling information. Unlike factors of age aptitude and motivation, its role in explaining why some L2 learners are more successful than others has not been well established, but extravagant claims have sometimes been made which need to be viewed with skepticism and caution. We do know that, whatever the relation of cognitive style to success, it involve a complex (and as yet poorly understood) interaction with specific L2 social and learning contexts.
Another dimension sometimes considered as a matter of cognitive style is sensory preference for processing input: visual, auditory, kinesthetic or tactile. Apparently no one means of processing has an inherent advantage over other, but L2 learners reportedly feel more comfortable when teachers’ instructional strategies are congruent with their sensory preference. This dimension may also be age-related, with younger learners showing more preference for kinesthetic and tactile modalities. (cited in Reid 1987)

**Personality**

Personality factors are sometimes added to cognitive style in characterizing more general learning style. Speculation and research in SLA has included the following factors, also often characterized as endpoints on continua. As with cognitive styles, most of us are somewhere in between the extremes. Boldface print in this figure indicates positive correlation with success in L2 learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anxious</th>
<th>Self confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk-avoiding</td>
<td>Risk-taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shy</td>
<td>Adventuresome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introverted</td>
<td>Extroverted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inner-directed</td>
<td>Other-directed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>Impulsive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imaginative</td>
<td>Uninquisitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>Uncreative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathetic</td>
<td>Insensitive to others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerant of ambiguity</td>
<td>Closure-oriented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anxiety has received the most attention in SLA research, along with lack of anxiety as an important component of self-confident. Anxiety correlated negatively with measures of L2 proficiency including grades awarded in foreign language classes meaning that higher anxiety tends to go with lower levels of success in L2 learning. In addition to self-confidence, lower anxiety may be manifested by more risk-taking or more adventuresome behavior.

Although personality factors are defined as individual traits systematic cultural differences are found between groups of learners. For example, oral performance in English classes generated relatively more anxiety for Korean students (Truitt 1915) than for Turkish students (Kunt 1997). This may be because of cultural difference in concepts of “face” or because of cultural differences in classroom practices and experiences.

Learning strategies

Differential outcomes of language learning may result because of individuals’ behaviors and techniques that they adopt in their efforts to learn a second language. Learner often make a conscious choice of strategies, but very often this choice is a result of other factors such as their own cognitive style, their level of motivation and sometimes in the situations that they find themselves in. it is also seen that learners choose learning strategies which are culturally based. Their socialization experiences shape the strategies of language learning and the outcomes also may differ thereof.

Psychological perspectives on what is acquired in SLA concentrate on additions or changes that occur in neurological makeup and on how the multilingual brain is organized. Some consider the process of learning to be largely a matter of abstracting rules or principles, and some to be more a Physical neurological development of associative networks and connections. The question of why some learners are more successful than others leads to the examination of differences in the learners themselves. We find that language-learning outcomes are influenced by age, aptitude, and motivation. Other factors in individuals’ learning styles and strategies correlate with degree of success in SLA. Humans are inherently social creatures, and it is difficult to assess individual cognitive factors in language learning apart from the influence of the learner’s total social context, which will be considered next.
When a language is acquired it is not enough to take into consideration the language itself but also the social and cultural knowledge embedded in the language being learned. What must L2 learners know and be able to do in order to communicate effectively? Part of this knowledge involves different ways of categorizing objects and events and expressing experiences. But an important part involves learners understanding their own and others’ roles as members of groups or communities with sociopolitical as well as linguistic bounds. What difference does group membership and identity make in regard to what is learned, how it is acquitted and why some learners are more successful than others?

The term language community refers to a group of people who share knowledge of a common language to at least some extent. Multilingual individuals are often members of more than one language community- generally to different degrees, and the one or ones they orient themselves to at any given moment is reflected not only in which segment of their linguistic knowledge they select, but which interaction skills they use, and which features of their cultural knowledge they activate.

Differences between monolingual and multilingual communicative competence are due in part to the different social functions of first and second language learning, and to the differences between learning language and learning culture. L1 learning for children is an integral part of their socialization into their native language community: a child’s native language is normally part of his or her native culture, and thus part of the body of knowledge, attitudes, and skills which are transmitted from one generation to the next. L2 learning may be part of second culture learning and adaptation, but the relationship of SLA to social and cultural learning differs greatly with circumstances.

Here one needs to distinguish between SL (second language), FL (foreign language) and AL (auxiliary language).

SL is generally learned and used within the context of a language community which dominantly includes members who speak it natively; it is needed to participate in that community socially, academically, politically and economically. Communicative competence in a second language often requires considerable knowledge of the larger community’s culture and social
structure, although learners may be selective in deciding which elements they want to adopt as part of their own identity.

Learners of FL usually do so within the context of their own native culture and often have little opportunity to interact with members of the language community who speak the FL natively, and typically have little opportunity or need to participate fully in the FL society.

An AL is learned in a context where it will function for political or technological purposes, and when its use will generally be limited to these social domains; to the extent an AL is required at all for face-to-face interaction, it is likely to be used in linguistically diverse settings which require participants to make use of a common language code for a restricted range of social functions.

Within the definition of communicative competence, then, the content of “what a speaker needs to know”, as well as judgments of relative success in attaining that knowledge, depend on the social context within which he or she learns and is using the language.

One of the most important contributions of sociolinguistics has been the demonstration that much of what earlier linguists had considered unsystematic irregularity in language production can be seen to follow regular and predictable patterns, when treated as variable features. Which variable feature occurs in the production of any one speaker (native or language learner) depends largely on the communicative contexts in which it has been learned and is used. Some relevant contextual dimensions are linguistic, psychological, microsocial and macrosocial.

**Microsocial**

An important input for L2 learning is interaction with native speakers of the target language. The role of interaction in SLA is based on Socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky 1962, 1978). A key concept in this approach is that interaction not only facilitates language learning but is a causative force in acquisition; further, all of learning is seen as essentially a social process which is grounded in socio-cultural settings, S-C Theory differs from most linguistic approaches in giving relatively limited attention to the structural patterns of L2 which are learned, as well as in emphasizing learner activity and involvement over innate and universal mechanisms; and it differs from most psychological approaches in its degree of focus on factors
outside the learner, rather than on factors which are completely in the learner’s head, and in its
denial that the learner is a largely autonomous processor. It also differs from most other social
approaches in considering interaction as an essential force rather than as merely a helpful
condition for learning.

Interaction means interpersonal interaction: i.e. communicative events and situations
which occur between people. One important context for symbolic mediation is such interpersonal
interaction between learner and experts (“experts” include teachers and more knowledgeable
learners) Vygotsky calls the level where much of this type of mediation occurs the Zone of
Proximal Development (ZPD). This is an area of potential development, where the learner can
achieve that potential only with assistance. According to S-C Theory, mental functions that are
beyond an individual’s current level must be performed in collaboration with other people before
they are achieved independently.

In addition to interpersonal interaction, S-C Theory requires consideration of
intrapersonal interaction: i.e. communication that occurs within an individual’s own mind. This
is also viewed by Vygotsky as a sociocultural phenomenon.

When reading, for example, we engage in intrapersonal as well as interpersonal activity:
“we draw interactively on our ability to decode print, our stored knowledge of the language we
are reading and the content schemata through which our knowledge of the world is organized”
(Ellis 1991:1). A second type of intrapersonal interaction that occurs frequently in beginning
stages of L2 learning- and in later stages when the content and structure of L2 input stretches or
goes beyond existing language competence- makes use of L1 resources. This takes place through
translation to oneself as part of interpretive problem-solving processes.

Another type of input that was of particular interest to Vygotsky was private speech. This
is the self-talk which many children engage in that leads to the inner speech that more mature
individuals use to control thought and behavior. While inner speech is not necessarily tied to the
surface forms of any specific language, private speech is almost always verbalized in L1 and/or
L2. Study of private speech when it is audible provides a “window into the mind” of sorts for
researchers, through which we can actually observe intrapersonal interaction taking place and
perhaps discover its functions in SLA.
A common intrapersonal activity that is closely related to private speech is “private writing”, in which individuals record language forms and other meaningful symbols on paper in order to help store items in memory, organize thought, solve problems, or such, without intent to communicate with others.

**Macrosocial**

Macrosocial factors may also influence linguistic variation. These include features of the larger political setting within which language learning and use takes place, including the social position and role of users (e.g. whether immigrant, international student, visiting dignitary), societal attitudes toward specific languages and multilingualism in general, and institutional organization (e.g. patterns of education, employment and political participation). For example, standard and prestige L2 forms are more likely to be used by international students or diplomats while they are functioning within those social roles than by the same individuals while they are shopping in a market or visiting tourist sites.

When macrosocial factors are considered in looking at how social contexts affect SLA, one needs to draw primarily on the frameworks of the *Ethnography of Communication* and *Social Psychology*. They are at several levels in the ecological context of SLA:

- Global and national status of L1 and L2
- Boundaries and identities
- Institutional forces and constraints
- Social categories
- Circumstances of learning

**Global and national status of L1 and L2**

At a global and national level, influences on SLA involve the power and status of learners’ native and target languages, whether overtly stated in official policies or covertly realized in cultural values and practices. Languages have power and status at global and national levels for both symbolic and practical reasons. An important symbolic function of language is political identification and cohesion. This is even more important for countries that are in the
process of nation-building. Second languages have also served political functions in times of conquest and empire-building: e.g. the Norman Conquest brought French L2 to Great Britain, colonial expansion brought English L2 to Africa and Asia and French L2 to Africa, and post-World War II domination by the Soviet Union brought Russian L2 to much of Eastern Europe.

With the end of British colonial rule in Africa and Asia, English remained in some of the newly independent nations for auxiliary for official functions. In Nigeria and India, for instance, English was selected as the official national language (in India along with Hindi) because it was widely used and accessible, although not native to any major group of citizens and thus ethnically neutral.

**Boundaries and Identities**

Crossing a linguistic boundary to participate in another language community, and to identify or be identified with it, requires learning that language. It is both a necessary tool for participation and a badge which allows passage. Full participation also commonly requires learning the culture of that community and adapting to those values and behavioural patterns: i.e. acculturation. Whether or not this occurs depends largely on group motivation.

John Schumann (1978) identifies group factors that affect SLA outcomes negatively in his Acculturation Model. For example, factors that are likely to create social distance between learner and target groups, limit acculturation, and thus inhibit L2 learning are: dominance of one group over the other, a high degree of segregation between groups, and desire of the learner group to preserve its own lifestyle. /English speakers in the Southwestern USA often live and work side by side with Spanish speakers for years without acquiring more than a few words of the language, and Spanish speakers in Paraguay who employ Guarani speakers as servants in their homes rarely learn more than a smattering of Guarani.

**Institutional forces and constraints**

Within the bounds of nations and communities, social institutions are systems which are established by law, custom, or practice to regulate and organize the life of people in public domains: e.g. politics, religion, and education. Many of these involve power, authority and
influence related to SLA; the forces and constraints which most concern us here are language related social control, determination of access to knowledge and other instances on linguistic privilege or discrimination.

Social categories

People are categorized according to many socially relevant dimensions: e.g. age, sex, ethnicity, education level, occupation and economic status. Such categorization often influences what experiences they have, how they are perceived by others, and what is expected of them. When they are L2 learners, members of different social categories frequently experience different learning conditions, and different attitudes or perceptions form within both native and target language communities. Therefore, this is another level we need to consider in the macrosocial context of SLA.

Age

Young L2 learners are more likely than older learners to acquire the language in a naturalistic setting as opposed to a formal classroom context. They are more likely to use the L2 in highly contextualized face-to-face situations rather than decontextualised academic ones, or ones which initially involve reading and writing.

Gender

We can see that different attitudes and learning conditions which are experienced by males and females may advantage one group over the other for SLA in different ways in different societies, but neither group has an innate advantage.

Ethnicity

Ethnic category may have influence on SLA primarily because of socially constructed attitudes from within native and target communities as a result of historic or current intergroup relations related to social boundaries and identities. These attitudes determine to a significant degree what input L2 learners will be exposed to and make use of, as well as the nature of their interaction with native speakers and other learners of the target language.
The relationship between people assigned to different ethnic categories is usually characterized along one of two dimensions when the different categories coexist in heterogeneous societies: perceived horizontal distance between the groups, or relative power and prestige of one over the other. Members of ethnic groups who perceive themselves to have much in common are more likely to interact, and thus are more likely to learn the other’s language. Miller (2000) reports that ethnicity is one of the factors involved in perceptions of difference in her study of migrant high school students in Australia. She found that fair-haired Europeans who physically resembled their Australian classmates established friendships and assimilated more readily than did differently appearing students from Asia. Other factors potentially contributing to perceptions of social distance include religion and cultural background along with patterns of behavior that are considered appropriate for interaction with strangers or new acquaintances.

Circumstances of learning

The final macrosoical factors in the ecological context of SLA to be considered are circumstances of learning. We begin with learners’ prior educational experiences. These are part of the larger social context within which SLA takes place because learning begins with children’s first experiences with the families into which they are born, the communities to which they belong, and the cultural environment within which they live. By the time children reach the age of five or six, they will be ready for formal education. Also by this time they have been inculturated with the intrinsic values of their natives culture. They will also be aware of the rules of behavior which are considered appropriate for their role in the community, and established the procedures for continued socialization. They have learned how to learn.

A clear example of culture-based learning strategies is seen in the superior capacity for rote learning among Asian students who have had more experience with teaching methods that involve memorization. Chinese students score significantly higher than Europeans and Americans on tests that measure memory for numbers, which reflects ways they have learned to learn in the course of earlier schooling. This advantage is lost if Chinese students are schooled in Europe or America, which proves that their achievement is based on prior educational experience and not genetic makeup. Chinese students learning English as an L2 may learn more effectively and efficiently through memorization, while this approach may not work as well for students less accustomed to this learning strategy.
Given the sociolinguistic perspective, then: (1) what is acquired in L2 includes variable linguistic structures and knowledge of when to use each; (2) the process of acquisition includes progress through stages in which different types of variability are evident; and (3) reasons why some learners are more successful than others include how well they can perceive and align their own usage in accord with the target system.

No individual factors in the macrosocial context of SLA can be isolated from others. Circumstances of learning are related to the nation that the learner lives in and its history, culture and geopolitical position, and to social and economic categorizations within the society, which in turn are related to and reflect or determine the status of the languages involved. All of these factors powerfully influence the microsocial contexts of learning, determining who does and does not have opportunities for L2 input and interaction and of what sort, and what the outcomes of L2 learning are likely to be. These various factors are beyond the control of the individual, but whether options are available or not, one’s L1 and possible L2(s) can have profound effects on the course of one’s life.

We need to define what the L2 learner has finally obtained acquired in terms of communicative competence. The definition of communicative competence is broadly inclusive in scope: “everything that a speaker needs to know in order to communicate appropriately within a particular community.” This construct combines the knowledge of language which defines linguistic competence, knowledge of the specific components and levels of a language, and knowledge that is required for their appropriate use in communicative activities.

In considering the purposes for which people learn second languages, we must make a distinction between at least two fundamental types of communicative competence: academic competence and interpersonal competence.

Academic competence is defined as the ability to use the second language in an academic set up to learn other subjects. It would also mean the ability to use it for scholarly research and in professional fields. Interpersonal competence encompasses knowledge required of learners who plan to use the L2 primarily in face-to-face contact with other speakers. As with academic competence, vocabulary is the most important level of language knowledge for these learners to acquire, although the domains of vocabulary involved are likely to be very different. Knowledge
which enables them to participate in listening and speaking activities merit the highest priority for interpersonal contexts.

The contrast in priorities for L2 communicative activities depending on academic versus interpersonal needs is shown below. The key differences are that reading is typically much more important for academic than for interpersonal needs, and that speaking is usually much more important for interpersonal than for academic purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic competence</th>
<th>Interpersonal competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reading</td>
<td>1. Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Listening</td>
<td>2. Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Writing</td>
<td>3. Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. speaking</td>
<td>4. Writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reading**

Reading is the most important area of activity for individuals to engage in for the development of L2 academic competence, and it is important as well for interpersonal functions and for merely “getting along” in any literate society. For many learners, reading is the primary channel for L2 input and a major source of exposure to associated literature and other aspects of the L2 culture. In the case of a language that is used for wider communication (such as English), reading also provides significant input related to technological developments, world news, and scientific discoveries. Reading ability in general is needed not only for access to printed resources such as books and journals but may also be needed for access to computers and the internet.

**Listening**

Listening accounts for most of the language input for L1 acquisition by children, but L2 learners often have much less opportunity to hear the target language and therefore receive proportionally less input via this channel. Listening is a critically important activity, however,
both for learners who want or need to participate in oral interpersonal communication and for learners who want or need to receive information from such oral sources as lectures and media broadcasts.

Speaker pronunciation is also a factor that influences listener comprehension. Many learners report that they find it easier to understand L2 utterances produced by speakers of their own L1 than by native speakers of the L2, presumably because the speakers’ accent is closer to their own phonological perceptual system. However, research on this topic suggests that familiarity with the accent is even more important (Flowerdew 1994). In universities where different native regional varieties of speech are found among instructors, students can improve their comprehension by tape-recording classroom proceedings for subsequent “ear-tuning” or familiarization, as well as for providing opportunities for review of linguistic structures and content. Replay of recorded L2 speech helps learners “work out what is being said as a pre-requisite to understanding what is being meant” (Lynch 2002: 47)

Writing

Writing is the most important productive activity for L2 learners to develop if they will use the language for academic purposes, or in certain types of service functions (e.g. providing reports to supervisors or clients). Writing is a common medium for testing knowledge in much of the world— including knowledge of the L2 itself, even within instructional programs that emphasize oral production. L2 speakers who pursue degrees in L2 medium universities typically must display a high level of writing proficiency through standardized entrance examinations and writing samples that are evaluated by admissions committees. Once enrolled in programs, such students must complete papers and other written assignments for many of their classes, and essay examinations are commonly used to judge student progress. Graduate degrees usually require writing extended texts (theses or dissertations) and many disciplines expect advanced students and graduates to publish their work in L2—medium journals and books.

Speaking

Speaking in conjunction with listening is a very important area of activity for L2 learners if they will be using the language for interpersonal purposes, whether these are primarily social or instrumental. There is need for speaking in virtually all situations where L2 learners participate
in the L2 speech community: tourists generally need to ask directions and seek information about hotels and entertainment; immigrants need to shop for goods, seek services, and describe symptoms in case of health problems; foreign students and other temporary residents need to negotiate transactions for housing, utilities, and currency exchange, as well as to express themselves in an academic or professional speech genre.

When can one understand that a learner has become successful in L2 language learning? The judgment that L2 learners have approached or achieved “near native” or native-like “competence means that there is little or no perceptible difference between their language performance and that of native speakers. Because one’s L2 system is never exactly the same as the native speaker’s, most of us would not consider the final state of L2 development to be completely native, although we may allow for some rare exceptions.

Although we have seen that knowledge of L2 goes well beyond what can be consciously learned and taught, we have also seen that L2 acquisition usually requires intentional effort, and that a number of individual and social factors strongly affect ultimate outcomes. We cannot control most of these factors, but recognizing them can contribute to efficiency and effectiveness in second language development. As a starting point, our findings about SLA suggest the following general guidelines for L2 learning and teaching:

- Consider the goals that individuals and groups have for learning an additional language.
- Set priorities for learning/teaching that are compatible with those goals.
- Approach learning/teaching tasks with an appreciation of the multiple dimensions that are involved: linguistic, psychological and social.
- Understand the potential strengths and limitations of particular learners and contexts for learning, and make use of them in adapting learning/teaching procedures.
- Be cautious in subscribing to any instructional approach which is narrowly focused or dogmatic. There is no one “best” way to learn or teach a second language.
- Recognize achievement in incremental progress. And be patient. Learning a language takes time.
2.7. CONCLUSION

In this chapter several research papers, unpublished theses and two books were reviewed. The ideas that were gleaned from the reviews are that culture is an important and inextricable part of language learning. Cultural differences can cause impediments in learning a second language. However, with effective strategies developed by teachers, these impediments could be overcome. This chapter also provided a theoretical background to the present research, especially Brown’s Optimal Distance Model. The importance of teaching culture in the English language classroom was another idea that was thrown up in the literature review section. The two books that were chosen for the book review are seminal books in the field of English Language Teaching. The first deals with approaches and methods of teaching English which have been traced for over a 100 years. The other book is an insight into the theories of second language learning. Both books are essential for teachers of English to understand how language teaching evolved and how their students acquire English as a second language. The literature review provided the necessary background and contributed to the formulation of the theses which are provided in the long run.