CHAPTER I

Language is a very essential element in the culture of a society. In fact, it is the very culture of a society. For instance, language is something that is common to all societies, and it is a system used by a society for communicating knowledge, ideas, beliefs, and values. It is a fundamental part of any society, and it is something that is experienced and understood by all the members of a society. Thus, language is not only a tool for communication, but also a way of teaching and preserving knowledge and values. It is through language that we can understand and appreciate the culture of a society. In order to understand and appreciate the culture of a society, we must understand its language.
INTRODUCTION

LANGUAGE - ITS IMPORTANCE AND NATURE

Language is a very essential element in the culture of a society. In fact, it is the basis of all cultural activities of a social organism. "Language is more than just audible sounds: it is a system used by a society for preserving and transmitting knowledge, skills, beliefs and values to all its members. Considered somewhat differently, language consists of a set of symbols accepted by all the members of a society with which to represent the total of the experiences and activities of that society". ¹ Thus language is not only a device for communicating with one's fellow-beings, but it is also a device by means of which man preserves knowledge and skill and hands it on in some symbolic form through his colleagues and descendants. Human beings are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. In order to understand and appreciate the culture of a human society we must understand its language. It is through language that human beings communicate with each other and share each

other's thoughts, feelings and emotions. Language is the vehicle of all human experience, and as such is the only foundation of human culture and civilization. Without language a human society would be unthinkable; even in the most primitive societies there are sign languages and simple speech.

We are not usually very much conscious of the importance of language to us. It has become a part of the various habits that we possess. No society can build up or transmit its culture to future generations if it does not have a language. That is why language is considered to be not only an element in the culture of a society, but also an essential basis for building it up. Though gestures, pictures and symbols are means of communication and do serve some purpose on certain occasions they prove effective only in so far as they reflect a certain language.

Language is a learned arbitrary system of vocal symbols through which human beings interact in terms of their common cultural experience; and language habits are more than motor skills of tongue and lips; they are units of sound and units of thoughts established in physical form within the brain. Language is systematic, which means that it works through a system of sounds which are uttered with a certain degree of pitch, stress and intonation. Each
language has its own sound system and it is different from others in that sense. No two languages are similar in respect of their sound systems as no two languages are evolved in exactly identical cultures. The roots of all words and the rules of sentence structure are all arbitrary. If tomorrow all people decide to change, modify, reconstruct and overhaul the language that they use and they agree to do that in any way they like, they could do that and that would be their language, provided they have the will to overcome the linguistic inertia. The symbol is just an arbitrary device to stand for a certain object which the people have in mind and which they represent by the symbol. The utterances have no meaning in themselves except the one we have given them. To a person who does not know that language, those utterances are meaningless; they are just certain sounds. The meanings are, therefore the outcomes of our cultural experiences for sharing which we use certain utterances or symbols.

Language symbols are primarily vocal. Writing is just a secondary representation of language - a graphic representation as it is called. No language could come into existence if no people spoke it; but there would be found in the world today many languages which have not been represented in written form. Writing is a device to preserve the language to facilitate its functioning in many ways.
But the written form is not the essential aspect of language. Long before writing was introduced there were languages. The basis of language is speech and not writing. Hearing and speaking are the focal points in learning a language. The natural order in learning any language is: hearing before speaking, speaking before reading, and reading before writing. As are the habits of speaking so will be the habits of writing.

Language has been analysed from various points of view by famous writers. Greene and Jorgensen¹ say, "Language is a subject in which many delicately balanced skills are interwoven in an extremely complex manner". Wittgenstein² says, "Language is an instrument. Its concepts are instruments". According to Nicholas Hans,³ "Language is one of the symbols of a nation.... It appears that language is more important in the building up of national character than any other factor".


As the components of a language are its phonology, morphology and syntax, learning a language does not mean learning the vocabulary of that language but it implies a mastery of the sound system (vowel and consonant sounds, stress, pitch and intonation) of that language and a mastery of the structure of that language which implies a command over the use of those features of arrangements of words and use of function words that are characteristics of that language and convey meanings. Hence vocabulary in the initial stages of learning a language would be strictly limited and confined only to those words that are essential for operating the structures. To quote Dr. Charles Fries,¹ "A person has learned a foreign language when he has thus, first, within a limited vocabulary mastered the sound system (that is when he can understand the stream of speech and achieve an understandable production of it) and has, second, made the structural devices (that is, the basic arrangement of utterances) matters of automatic habit". Language is a learned form of behaviour and hence it can be taught only through giving the child opportunities to use the language. Just as cycling or swimming can be learnt through actual practice only language also can be learnt through continuous practice alone.

PLACE OF HINDI

Among the several languages of India, Hindi holds an important place. Even before the attainment of independence Hindi had reached very high place of eminence since Mahatma Gandhiji had stressed the learning of Hindi. Gandhiji was strongly of opinion that Hindi was to be the medium of interprovincial as well as All India communication. Although English was the common language of India under British rule, it was neither proper nor necessary to give it the same status in Free India. To bind together the people of India speaking different languages there was the necessity of one National Language. Although there are a number of languages in India Hindi was (and is) the most widely spread language. A vast majority of the people of India have Hindi either for their mother tongue or as the medium of communication in their day-to-day life. The majority of the people of Northern India and Central India speak Hindi while in the south also Hindi is at least understood by many people. Moreover, in the pre-British period it had served as an inter-regional medium of communication. Hence Gandhiji chose Hindi as the National Language. The official Language Commission has also presented the same reasons for giving Hindi a special status.

Hindi has been adopted in the Constitution for the official business of the Union and for purposes of inter-state communication not because it is better
developed than the other regional languages are; not because a greater or more varied wealth of literary output is available in it; nor because it has presently a large availability of books in the sciences and in different other branches of modern knowledge. It is chosen for performing the job of the official language medium on pan-Indian levels because it happens to be understood and spoken, amongst the regional languages, by the largest number of people. Apart from the 42 per cent people of the total population returned as speaking this language as their mother tongue, it is understood to a considerable extent in areas outside the Hindi speaking areas, in the market places in cities, at Railway Stations and in places of pilgrimage where persons hailing from different regions of India and not knowing English have occasion to converse.

Hindi has attained a very important position today not only among Indian languages but also among foreign languages. Many foreign nations spend large amounts for teaching Hindi in their countries. Many Hindi books have been translated into foreign languages. Books on varied subjects are available in Hindi and the Government of India is taking steps for the publication of more books on different subjects in Hindi. In the south also many writers have risen up who, along with the North Indian writers, put forth their utmost efforts in developing and strengthening the language.

The Indian Union is comprised of separate well-defined regions which are inhabited by people who are

different from one another in their language as well as in
their manners, customs and ways of life. To bring cul-
tural unity in such a heterogeneous group is indeed very
difficult, unless some sort of clear contact, a common
link is established between them. This can be well achieved
through a common language which is easily accessible to the
common people. Hindi as a common language can bring the
people of India closer together culturally, socially, politi-
cally and in many other aspects. It is laid down in the
Constitution of India\(^1\) that "the official language of the
Union shall be Hindi" and that "for a period of fifteen
years from the commencement of this Constitution, the Eng-
lish language shall continue to be used for all the official
purposes of the Union for which it was being used immediately
before such commencement".

Hence it is necessary that the people of India
must necessarily have a working knowledge of Hindi. Article
351 of the Constitution of India\(^2\) has laid down that "It
shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the
Hindi language, to develop it so that it may serve as a
medium of expression for all the elements of the composite

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1. Durga Das Basu, *Shorter Constitution of India*. Calcutta:
culture of India and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages”.

One entire chapter has been devoted in the Report of the University Education Commission under the Presidentship of Dr. Radhakrishnan to the discussion on the adoption of Hindi as the medium of instruction. The place of Hindi in the future education programme of India has been extensively dealt with in this chapter. It has been clearly stated that Hindi is the only alternative in choosing the Federal language of India.

But Hindi will become the national language in the true sense only when people in non-Hindi speaking areas also learn and use Hindi with facility. As is evident from the opinion of great leaders and writers in many South Indian states, South Indians are not on the whole against the idea of having a link language, nor do they object to giving Hindi that place. But they do protest when they feel that Hindi is being imposed upon them. As Thirtha¹ has pointed out,

The general unwillingness of the Hindi people not to let the pupils in the Hindi regions compulsorily learn the Deccan languages in return to the

non-Hindi people compulsorily learning Hindi, has created considerable hostility for learning Hindi as a link language throughout the country and thereby has to an extent harmed the cause of national integration. It is very clear that no section of the country would like to be relegated to second rate citizenship even in the name of national integration. National integration can have a meaning to the people of India only in terms of social, economic and political aspirations of its citizens. To let one section of the people to learn Hindi without equalizing the curricular load of the Hindi-speaking pupils in schools is to sow the seeds of national disunity among the people.

The Union Minister of State for Education, Mr. Bhakt Darshan, who is a staunch advocate of Hindi, while declaring open the new building of the Ernakulam Central School expressed that if Hindi-speaking people would learn South Indian languages it would profit national integration. "He said that it would contribute much not only to the tri-lingual formula but also national integration, if Hindi-speaking people showed more and more interest in learning South Indian languages".¹

We should realise that the South Indians had volunteered to study and propagate Hindi even in the pre-independence period and a considerable number of them have passed examinations in Hindi and mastered the language without any external compulsion. We have to admit that still there are a vast majority of people in non-Hindi-speaking areas who have not acquired a working knowledge

¹. Indian Express, 4-11-1970, p.5.
of Hindi. Steps have to be taken to spread Hindi throughout India within a reasonable time limit. This should not be by compulsion, but by persuasion and encouragement.

From the above mentioned facts it is evident that Hindi must be given a very important place in the school curriculum of every state in India and Kerala cannot be an exception to this. Unless the propagation of Hindi is thus initiated and worked upon such an organized basis through the school course, the national unity and solidarity of India cannot be fully accomplished. If we aim at achieving this status for Hindi, we have to see that the teaching of Hindi also is effective, useful and successful.

In Kerala Hindi has been introduced in schools as a compulsory third language since 1949. Even before that, Hindi was taught as an optional subject in some schools of Kerala from 1934 onwards. Today the study of Hindi begins in Standard V and three periods a week have been allotted for teaching this language in each class. At the University level Hindi is taught as an optional language. In spite of all these efforts of the state to introduce a sound knowledge of the national language in the future citizens, the standard attained by our children in Hindi has not reached the expected level. The students are at a loss to express themselves in Hindi or even to understand spoken
Hindi. As Mr. Bhakt Darshan\textsuperscript{1} has remarked, "In non-Hindi areas the students are finding it difficult to pick up the language properly even after six to seven years of learning". Hence the teaching of Hindi in Kerala needs a thorough analysis and review with further improvement as the aim.

**OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING HINDI**

When we speak about the teaching of a certain language we have in mind certain skills which we want our children to develop. "Learning a second language is defined as acquiring the ability to use its structure within a general vocabulary under essentially the conditions of normal communication among native speakers at conversational speed".\textsuperscript{2}

In general, therefore, the aims of teaching any foreign language may be broadly categorized under two heads, viz., understanding the language when spoken or written, and expressing one's thoughts, feelings and ideas in speech as well as in writing. The four abilities, viz. (i) understanding the language when spoken (ii) understanding it when written (iii) expressing through speech one's thoughts and ideas, and (iv) expressing through writing what one thinks and feels, are the fundamental aims that deserve considera-

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tion. There is a fifth aim as well, the cultural aim as it is called, which relates to the acquisition and development of a taste for literature in that language and all that is found in the form of prose, poetry, drama etc. But study of literature is not a fundamental aim of teaching a language at secondary level.

The aims of teaching a language, like those of other subjects are not absolute goals towards the realization of which one must assiduously make efforts. The aims are in all situations to be relevant to the needs and demands of those situations as well as the needs and capacities of the learners. The objectives of teaching a subject do not have any inherent worth of their own so as to be pursued for their own sake. From a practical point of view objectives can be explained as specific activities that are to be pursued for enabling the learners to obtain the desired outcomes which would equip them for certain specific purposes in life. Scholars generally agree on the point that our teaching of Hindi has suffered because we have failed to define our objectives clearly. Attempts have rarely been made to analyze the objectives in a practical point of view to help the class-room teacher. A bare enumeration of the four fundamental skills in the teaching and learning of a language does not help the teacher or the learner. However it is encouraging that organizations
like the National Council of Educational Research and Training and the State Institute of Education are taking desirable steps in this regard.

The importance of Hindi has been already discussed. A good command of Hindi opens vast opportunities to a person in various walks of life. A student who has offered Hindi and has a desire to study it must acquire all the skills in using the language so that he can derive benefit out of all the labour he puts in and the time he devotes to learn the language. There are people who believe that for South Indian students all that is necessary is to acquire a passive knowledge of Hindi, which means an ability to understand Hindi, when spoken or written and that a second (or third) language need not be taught for giving an active command of it. Such a conviction is not justified in the case of Hindi in South India, specially in the context of modern situations. Whosoever is taught Hindi must be taught in such a way that he acquires an active command over the language. A good command of Hindi for those who study it, is not a matter of convention or any dogmatic belief, but is a matter of sheer necessity.

The situation today is that a vast majority of parents and students want to learn Hindi, and learn it well, because they know the advantages of learning the language. Hence
our schools must have an adequate programme so long as the situation remains unchanged. This implies that they should attempt to give boys and girls an active command over Hindi and develop suitable materials and tools so that it could be possible. The first step in that direction would be to attempt an analysis, from the practical point of view, of the basic skills they would aim at giving. In the process of learning a language, it would be futile to separate the fundamental abilities in respect of language learning into water-tight compartments. We have not only to recognize that these abilities are important, but have also to realize that they are inter-related, and proficiency in one is dependent upon, and also leads to proficiency in others.

The general objectives of teaching Hindi would therefore be not separate from those relating to the teaching of a language which has practical value from social, cultural, and economic point of view.

The objectives of teaching Hindi as laid down in the Report of the Workshop for paper-setters in different subjects, organized by the Gujarat S.S.C. Examination Board, Baroda, are as follows: ¹

1. To acquire the knowledge of the simple elements of language
2. To acquire skill in speaking Hindi
3. To acquire skill in reading Hindi
4. To acquire skill in writing Hindi
5. To acquire the ability to understand spoken words
6. To acquire the ability to understand written Hindi
7. To acquire ability for oral expression of thoughts
8. To acquire ability for written expression of thoughts
9. To acquire ability to translate
10. To increase interest in language and literature

Each objective is then broken down into detailed behavioural specifications. The objectives and specifications of teaching Hindi as laid down in the Guide Book for Hindi teachers1 are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Materials</th>
<th>Objectives and specifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Vocabulary (words, phrases, usages etc.) Hears them pronounced (Consonants, Vowels, stress, Pitch, Intonation etc.)</td>
<td>1. Recognizes the Phonemes 2. Recognizes similar Phonemes.</td>
</tr>
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Pronounces
(Consonants, Vowels,
Stress, Pitch, intonation etc.)

Sees the written form
(spelling)

2. Grammar and Structures
(Parts of speech, transformation, parasargas,
pratyayas, sandhis, samasams, padabandh,
subordinate sentence and sentence-construction)

3. Recognizes the difference between dissimilar phonemes.

4. Recalls

5. Recognizes the correlation between spoken and written forms

6. Recognizes.

II The pupil comprehends
(reading and hearing)

1. Understands meanings according to contexts.

2. Corrects mistakes

3. Grasps the main ideas

4. Expands ideas

5. Gives proper title

6. Grasps the central thought

7. Compares

8. Cites examples

9. Transforms and translates

10. Analyzes

11. Evaluates

12. Comprehends the style of language

13. Classifies main facts, thoughts etc.

14. Pronounces correctly

15. Reads fluently

16. Reads with attention

17. Reads aloud with proper feelings

18. Keeps proper punctuations

19. Listens with confidence
20. Listens with attention
21. Understands the feelings of the author.

III The pupil acquires the ability for expression

Speaking and Writing or oral and written
1. Reproduces learnt material
2. Uses correct language
3. Uses proper words
4. Adopts suitable style for expression
5. Keeps sequence of subjects
6. Keeps economy
7. Adopts proper style
8. Writes in beautiful handwriting
9. Uses proper punctuation marks
10. Writes correct spelling

Mainly in writing
11. Speaks with proper flow
12. Keeps the rules regarding pronunciation
13. Keeps proper punctuations
14. Speaks with proper expressions.

Mainly in speaking

IV The pupil appreciates beautiful pieces of literature

1. Reads attractively
2. Appreciates the feelings
3. Grasps the ideas of the poet
4. Memorizes beautiful lines
5. Picks out beautiful wordings.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

It is a startling realization that a considerable
percentage of pupils fail in the S.S.L.C. examination of Kerala in the Hindi paper. These children who appear to have normal intellectual potential are unable to receive help for the very problem that forces this failure. Their educational deficit remains unrecognized misdia-
gnosed, or, misunderstood. The children with language disorders appear to stand alone with a learning problem that has no educational provision. Specific educational procedures must be initiated if these problems are to be tackled adequately. For this the first step would be a general diagnosis of the difficulties of pupils in the different areas of the Hindi language.

There is a general complaint in Kerala that the great majority of the students coming out after completing high school education cannot speak, write or even read Hindi without mistakes. The general public impression that the standard of Hindi in the schools of Kerala has gone down, is at times reflected in the opinions of even leading personages in this field. It is to be regretted that after studying a language continuously for a minimum period of six years, one is at a loss even to comprehend matters written in that language. This set-up in the educa-
tional system of ours calls for urgent steps for the dia-
gnosis and remedial treatment of the difficulties of pupils in learning Hindi.
Hindi is a new language as far as the pupils of Kerala are concerned. Pupils have to face many difficulties in learning a language which is entirely different from their mother tongue. Hindi is distinctly different from Malayalam, the regional language of Kerala in several respects in sentence structure, fundamentals of grammar, word order etc. To add to this difficulty, the pupils of Kerala are forced to learn English as the compulsory second language. Naturally therefore, our pupils find it rather hard to make themselves through with the principles and practices of Hindi. This set up also necessitates a thorough diagnosis of the difficulties of pupils.

Recently the Government of India has begun to use Hindi as the language for official inter-communication and all business transactions. Even in filling a money order from knowledge of Hindi has become essential. Hence our children have to be equipped with the ability to converse correctly and effectively and the ability to draft letters and applications properly. This necessitates a diagnostic study of the probable difficulties in learning Hindi.

Hindi is an effective medium for the integration of heterogeneous factors existing in different regions of India. It will go a long way in achieving national unity and solidarity. But the very process of developing and using the language from this point of view may develop
attitudinal resistances and focus attention on social and administrative difficulties which need to be studied.

Learning of Hindi has now become a necessity from the vocational point of view. Many people from Kerala have already migrated to North India for employment and the number of such people will only increase due to the prevailing unemployment problem coupled with the increase in population. Previously the knowledge of English was enough to realize the ambition of such people. But now Hindi has taken the place of English as the link language, and, without a sound knowledge of Hindi they will not be able to secure a footing in the Northern parts of India where chances of employment are more.

The studies so far conducted in this field are not adequate, considering the importance of the problem. In Kerala six previous studies have been done related to the teaching of Hindi. They are all M.Ed. theses and of limited scope. All the investigators have taken only specific areas of Hindi teaching. Only one study has been done related to spelling errors and that also is an open analysis of the spelling difficulties of pupils in one school alone. An overall study, of a diagnostic type, of the difficulties in learning Hindi is necessary to provide remedial instruction to the pupils.
The present investigator's experience of teaching 'Psychology of Learning and Remedial Education' to the teacher-trainees in the two Hindi Training Colleges in the state has aroused her interest in the field of remedial education in Hindi. Earlier, the investigator had taught Hindi in the schools of Kerala for eleven years. The inability of pupils to express themselves in Hindi was one of the major drawbacks experienced by her. From close observation during her teaching, the investigator has long felt that there are several difficulties which the pupils of Kerala face in learning Hindi. As a person working for the cause of Hindi education, the investigator naturally thought that systematic research should be done in this field.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In the light of the factors mentioned above the investigator decided to undertake "A Diagnostic Study of the Difficulties of Pupils in the Schools of Kerala in Learning Hindi".

DEFINITION OF TERMS

By the term schools of Kerala we mean the schools of Kerala excluding the Central Higher Secondary Schools and other schools which prepare pupils for examinations
other than the S.S.L.C. Examination conducted by the Commissioner for Government Examinations, Kerala. Because the subject itself has a wide investigational area, attempt has not been made to cover the full span of school life. It was proposed to do the testing at the school final stage where the cumulative effect of the difficulties could be tested in the most economic manner possible.

By the term difficulties is meant the overall difficulties with reference to twenty-seven areas of the Hindi language. It also includes the difficulties external to the language—personal, social, administrative and methodological.

The Dictionary of Education\(^1\) defines diagnosis as (1) the procedure by which the nature of a disorder, whether, physical, mental, or social, is determined by discriminating study of the history of the disorder and of the symptoms present; (2) determination of the characteristics and problems of individual students being counseled; not restricted to pathological disorders or "problem cases".

In the Dictionary of Education, educational diagnosis has been defined as the determination of the nature

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of learning difficulties and deficiencies.

The 'Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language'1 points out that the word 'diagnosis' is derived from the Greek word 'diagignosekein' meaning to distinguish; (dia = through, asunder; gignoskein = to know). The following three shades of meaning are given in the dictionary:

1. The art or act of recognizing the presence of disease from its symptoms, and deciding as to its character; also the decision reached.

2. Determination of a type or condition through a case or specimen study.

3. Conclusion arrived at through critical perception or scrutiny; hence keen understanding of appearances, one's diagnosis of a situation.

According to the 'Chamber's Twentieth Century Dictionary'2 the word diagnosis is a derivation of the Greek word (dia = between; gnosis = knowing). The meaning of the word is 'the identification of a disease by means of its symptoms; a formal determining description'.

According to Gates and Russell,3 "The process of detecting the types and causes of difficulties in spelling

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or other subjects is usually called diagnosis".

Schonell<sup>1</sup> discusses the difference between attainment tests and diagnostic tests and describes the nature of diagnostic tests. According to him, "The function of the diagnostic test is more searching than that of the attainment test; although the latter provides diagnostic information, its main purpose is to appraise, while that of the diagnostic test is to analyse. The diagnostic test estimates the pupils' proficiency in separate, significant skills which contribute towards success in the subject. It surveys the pupil's ability in the various elements which together constitute the total processes in the subject".

According to Anastasi,<sup>2</sup> "Diagnostic Tests are designed to analyze the individual's performance and provide information on the causes of difficulty". Anastasi also cites Iowa Silent Reading Tests as examples for diagnostic tests. The author specially stresses the point that although survey and group tests may serve to identify individuals in need of further attention, the diagnosis and therapy of the disabilities often represent a problem for the clinician.

ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

Diagnosis may be considered from two points of view. Any type of diagnosis first involves the location of errors. These errors may be analyzed from two points of view: (a) from the stand point of the errors made and (b) from the stand point of the pupil making the error.\(^1\) Brueckner and Melby\(^1\) express the same ideas in the following words: "Some investigators have attempted to classify errors by analyzing the mis-spellings, and grouping them according to apparent causes. Other investigators have made careful psychological studies of the work of pupils of inferior spelling ability through a direct observation and a measurement of the efficiency of their methods of work".

Thus errors can be analyzed with the pupil as the centre to find out his specific language deficiencies by a study of the type of errors. An attempt may then be made to discover, if possible, the causes of difficulties by physical examination (of vision etc.) and from observation. Attempts may also be made to study the school and home environment of pupils and his interests. This will help the teacher to plan a programme of individual remedial instruction.

Schonell and Schonell\(^1\) are of opinion that in interpreting the diagnostic test results, the following factors also should be considered.

1. **Emotional handicaps - school-centred** - such as failure, confusion from poor teaching or discontinuous instruction or censure resulting in loss of confidence and diffidence.

2. **Emotional handicaps - home-centred** - such as insecurity on account of the parents' attitude towards the pupil, towards each other or towards the school, undue criticism and even maltreatment at home; little chance of restful sleep or poor mental development.

Schonell and Schonell have further elaborated their analysis with reference to diagnosis in reading and arithmetic.

According to Greene, Jorgensen and Gerberich,\(^2\) educational diagnosis implies the use of more or less technical procedures designed to locate specific learning and instructional difficulties, and if possible to determine their causes. For the medical expert, diagnosis means the careful and extensive observation of the patient under controlled conditions, including the use of many and


varied professional instruments which make possible exact and objective observations. For the teacher, diagnosis has many of the same implications, but unfortunately much of the exactness, objectivity, and precision of the medical diagnostician's instruments appear to be missing in the teacher's equipment. Even today only a few objective measuring instruments capable of rendering reasonably precise diagnosis are available to the pedagogical diagnostician. Properly selected diagnostic tests reveal and bring to light specific weaknesses, and to a certain extent causes of weakness. "Diagnosis must be more exact than broad statements of general functions. It is not enough to discover that a child is unable to read silently. The exact nature of his handicap must be revealed before it is possible to undertake a remedial program. The more specific the diagnostic information revealed, the more exactly the remedial material can be made to fit the need. To return to a frequently used illustration, it is found by diagnosis that the child is unable to add, but unless the exact point at which is mastery of additions breaks down can be determined by the diagnosis, teaching or remedial efforts are largely wasted. One of the outstanding reasons why more effective teaching and remedial work has not been done in certain fields is that no adequate analysis of basic skills can be made or has been made".
Greene and Collaborators\(^1\) have gone into specific details in the diagnosis of various aspects.

Brueckner and Bond\(^2\) have listed three levels of diagnosis. They are: (1) general diagnosis (2) analytical or differential diagnosis and (3) case-study procedures.

The purpose of general diagnosis is to make a general appraisal of the characteristics and achievements of groups of children, not a detailed analysis of outcomes in any particular curriculum area or of the status of individual pupils.

Analytical diagnosis is the use of systematic procedures for locating or identifying specific weaknesses or shortcomings in some curriculum area, such as reading, arithmetic or for some particular individual.

'Case study procedures' means the application of clinical diagnostic techniques that will enable the teacher or clinical worker to study in detail the performance or achievement of an individual pupil with an evident learning problem, so as to determine as specifically as possible the nature and seriousness of the learning difficulty and the underlying causes.

\(^{1}\) Ibid., pp.114-115.

The authors have also illustrated these three levels of diagnosis. The authors have gone very deep into the subject and given detailed descriptions of even diagnosis purely clinical in nature. But their approach is more individual than general.

Clinical diagnosis by less formal procedures has also been described by Brueckner and Bond. The diagnostic procedures in this approach suggested by them are:

1. Observation of the pupil's behaviour and performance
2. Analysis of written responses
3. Analysis of oral responses or oral accounts of procedures
4. Interviews and questioning
5. Analysis of a performance or of something produced by the pupil.

Based on the results of Burt's investigation, Hughes and Hughes have laid down some questions which would prove useful for diagnostic purposes. The main factors in these questions are summarised below:

1. Child's intellectual level (I.Q.)
2. All-round or specific backwardness

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3. The child being eye-minded or ear-minded

4. The child's difficulty in remembering (a) immediately (b) after an interval

5. Bad home conditions such as inadequate sleep, fatigue from excessive home duties, friction between parents, over-indulgence, undue severity etc.

6. Unsatisfactory physical conditions such as signs of under-nourishment, eye-defects, deafness etc.

7. Signs of abnormal emotional tension such as stammering, left-handedness, twitching, excessive fears, lack of concentration, laziness, inability to play, proneness to tears etc.

8. Unsatisfactory school conditions - operation of such conditions in the past, e.g., frequent casual absences, long absences at such critical times as the ages of six or seven when the first formal lessons in reading and number would normally have been received, frequent changes of teacher, unwise promotions (too rapid or too slow), unsuitable work (too difficult or too abstract, repressive treatment.

Greene et al. have discussed in detail the various aspects included in the diagnosis of the receptive and expressive language arts. Discussing about the receptive language arts the authors have quoted from Nichols.¹ Nichols indicates that the following factors appear to influence the individual's listening comprehension.

1. Recognition of correct English usage
2. Size of the listener's vocabulary
3. Ability to make inferences
4. Ability to see the organization plan of a speech
5. Ability to listen for main ideas rather than for specific facts
6. Use of special techniques for the improvement of concentration
7. Real interest in the subject discussed
8. Physical fatigue
9. Audibility of the speaker
10. Respect for listening as a means of learning
11. Susceptibility to distractions
12. Experience in listening.

The authors have also quoted from Harris'\textsuperscript{1} analysis of the typical causes of reading difficulties.

1. Low intelligence
2. Visual defects
3. Auditory defects
4. Other physical conditions - defects of muscular co-ordination and speech, glandular disturbances and neurological difficulties
5. Lack of hemispherical dominance
6. Poor school record

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{1} Albert J. Harris, How To Increase Reading Ability. A Guide To Individualized and Remedial Methods. Second edition, New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1947, Ch.7 cited in Green et.al., p.400.
\end{flushright}
7. Deficiencies in arithmetic, spelling and handwriting

8. Emotional and social problems.

Harris\(^1\) however is of the view that it is "impossible to determine the relative contribution of each handicap to the total picture of failure.... From a practical standpoint, the aim of a thorough diagnosis is not to fix the blame for the child's difficulties, but to discover each of the many conditions that may require correction."

Discussing about the expressive language arts Greene et al. have given details regarding the diagnosis of oral language disabilities. In this connection they have quoted Blanton\(^2\) and Mulgrave.\(^3\) Blanton recognized four fundamental speech disorders: (1) delayed speech (2) oral inactivities (3) letter substitutions, and (4) stuttering. Mulgrave has divided problems of speech pathology into two major types: (1) Functional speech disorders and (2) Organic speech disorders. Each of these types is further classified elaborately into sub-types.

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Greene and Collaborators\(^1\) have given a detailed outline of the skills peculiar to written expression. The broad classifications they have given are:

1. Words - Skill in the spelling, choice use and definition
2. Sentences - Skill in the use, form, structure and organization
3. Paragraphs - Skill in the form, structure and organization
4. Letter writing - Skill in selection of content and use of form and mechanics
5. Outline form
6. Bibliographical form
7. General Mechanical factors.

Many pages have been devoted by the authors for the discussion of handwriting. The outcomes of handwriting instructions have been given in detail. According to the authors the measurement of handwriting quality in its refined form is concerned with two factors: (1) quality, or degree of legibility and (2) speed or the quantity of writing produced in a given unit of time. They have also given a detailed analysis of defects in handwriting. The major defects are: (1) too much slant (2) writing too straight (3) writing too heavy (4) writing too light (5) writing too angular (6) writing too irregular (7) spacing too wide. The possible causes for each of these difficulties

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have also been given.

After presenting a detailed discussion of the objectives and outcomes of foreign language instruction, the authors suggest remedial measures for the problems in the field. They say that reading, pronunciation (accent), vocabulary (idiom), and grammar constitute the major remedial areas and a careful diagnosis of possible causes of difficulty must be made. Reading tests, and informal objective tests in vocabulary, grammar, composition, and reading and comprehension will be useful for this diagnosis.

Brueckner and Bond\(^1\) have devoted a whole chapter for the diagnosis and treatment of language difficulties. They have listed the factors associated with language difficulties. According to them the commonly recognized causes of deficiencies may be grouped under (1) personal and social factors, and (2) instructional factors.

Personal and social factors include (a) physical development - immaturity, defects (b) low mental level and intellectual immaturity (c) slow vocabulary and speech development; limited writing vocabulary, lack of facility in language (d) emotional status, poise, tension, attitudes towards language expression (e) speech defects; poor breath control; inability to express ideas logically and forcefully

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(f) lack of knowledge about specifics of written or oral expression; failure to understand them; low spelling ability (g) limited background of social experiences, including reading (h) failure to appreciate social standards of expression (i) unfavourable environmental influences contributing to the use of incorrect forms of speed.

Instructional factors include the following aspects:

(a) Curriculum does not include social situations that motivate the learning of language expression; contents too difficult and not well-arranged.

(b) Undue emphasis is placed on formal aspects of expression; uses obsolete procedures, materials, content.

(c) Teacher uses method of incidental teaching

(d) Instruction fails to deal with specifics that may be the source of difficulty

(e) Diagnosis is not provided for and mass methods of teaching are used

(f) Teaching may be unskillful and ineffective

(g) Instructional materials may be inadequate

(h) Goals not adjusted to capacity of learners.

The authors have given various diagnostic tests in reading, handwriting and spelling and analyzed each area in detail suggesting remedial measures. But the analyses are very deep and technical.

While discussing backwardness of pupils in various
subjects on the basis of research evidence Schonell\(^1\) has also discussed the various aspects of language learning and the difficulties therein. He has presented in detail the various means by which children recognize words. These means are: (a) total visual pattern (b) phonic constituents (c) articulatory recognition (d) meaning (e) kinaesthetic clues.

Schonell has diagnosed the disabilities in reading. These disabilities are: (1) letter by letter attack (2) correct phonic attack (3) weak auditory analysis (4) visual errors (5) use of meaning of words (contextual clues).

The causes of these disabilities, according to Schonell are: (1) weakness in perception of visual patterns of words (2) combination of handedness and eyedness amongst backward and normal readers (3) defects of visual acuity (4) weakness in auditory discrimination of speech sounds (5) speech defects and their relation to reading disability (6) stammering (7) causal factors within the home and the school: (a) immaturity - psychological or organic and educational (b) irregularity of attendance and change of school (c) neglect of reading disability within the school (8) emotional factors (9) plurality of causes.

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The disabilities in silent reading are: (a) fast but inaccurate reading (b) slow but accurate reading.

The author is of opinion that the premier emphasis in reading should be on accuracy irrespective of speed, that speed should not be encouraged at the expense of accuracy, and that slowness need not be considered a handicap except when it seriously interferes with the amount read and degree of understanding achieved.

The author has also discussed the causes of spelling disability. These causes are: (1) weakness of visual perception of words for both discrimination and span (2) weakness in auditory analysis and synthesis of verbal material (3) weakness in general intelligence, together with some perceptual deficiency (4) sensory defects, particularly visual defects (5) faulty pronunciation (6) temperamental attitudes, particularly variations in attitudes towards correctness of detail (7) emotional inhibitions (8) environmental conditions such as absence from school, frequent change of school, bad teaching methods etc.

Blair has devoted the major portion of his book on diagnostic and remedial teaching to the diagnosis of poor readers and remedial measures. Though he has not dealt with the diagnosis of language difficulties in general, he has suggested ways of identifying poor readers. The ways
suggested by him are 

1. observing pupils while they study 
2. using interest inventories 
3. using graded sets of 
4. studying eye-movements during reading 
5. administering standardized reading tests 
6. administering diagnostic reading tests 
7. administering informal teacher-made tests of reading. The techniques for providing remedial treatment also have been discussed.

According to Blair, the main causes of spelling disability are: 

1. physical factors 
2. intellectual factors 
3. emotional factors 
4. poor handwriting 
5. errors due to mispronunciation 
6. poor visual perception 
7. poor visual memory for words and 
8. lack of spelling practice.

In discussing the causes of deficiencies in handwriting Blair has followed Hildreth who has stated that disability in handwriting can be traced to two major sources 

1. eccentricities or deficiencies in the mental or physical condition of the writer and 
2. inappropriateness of instructional method. Under the first group comes inaptitude for learning motor and language skills, unstable and erratic

2. Ibid., pp.265-271.
temperament, disinclination to practice, difficulty in retaining visual impressions, left-handedness or ambidexterity, defective vision necessitating glasses, especially for astigmatism, paralytic, spastic, crippled conditions etc.

Among the factors falling under the second group are: too early, forced instruction, complete lack of supervision, uniform, undifferentiated group drills, practice of error, inappropriate writing materials - pencils, pens, paper, incorrect position of paper, transition from one style of writing to another, neglect of writing practice in high school etc.

The author\(^1\) discusses the causes of disability in oral and written English. They are: (1) physical ailments (2) inferior scholastic aptitude, (3) lack of interest, (4) previous failure, (5) poor language usage in the home or community (6) lack of knowledge as to what constitutes good English and (7) lack of sufficient practice on correct language forms.

Blair says that all these factors should be taken into account in carrying out diagnosis.

Schubenz has laid down the simple techniques by which a child of relatively low intellectual capacity can

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be made to perform approximately as well as a child of relatively high intellectual capacity. The techniques are (1) the emphatic and frequent training with letters which establish their special identity as individually shaped structural elements for every linguistic construction (2) the emphatic and frequent training in simple rules concerning both the phonetic variations of the individual letters and the fusion of letters and also concerning quite generally the construction of word and text (3) the emphatic and frequent training in the analysis of reading texts and in the synthesis of writing texts of all kinds.

N.B. Smith has classified reading into four major growth areas. They are: (1) word identification (2) getting meanings from reading (3) study skills (4) rate.

The three meaning-getting processes are (1) literal comprehension, (2) interpretation and (3) critical reading.

Smith has also analyzed study skills. The major study skills are: (1) selection and evaluation, (2) organization, (3) location of information and following directions.

Daniels\(^1\) has stressed the importance of clear and
detailed diagnostic information about the specific defici-
cencies exhibited by children failing to read. He is of op-
inion that many of our reading failures occur because the
children have not developed the ability to hear the phone-
mes of which spoken words are compounded. Without the
ability to hear the sounds in words and to link this analy-
sis with certain spelling patterns in the language, reading
in its true sense is impossible.

According to Corrine E. Kass\(^2\) reading disability
(dyslexia) is a retardation in reading which occurs after
adequate instruction and which is not due to mental retarda-
tion or sensory defects (blindness or deafness).

S.A. Tordrup\(^3\) has studied the reversals in reading
and spelling. He says that reversals have been connected
with instability of hemisphere dominance and with a so-called
directional confusion. According to him, the contributory
factors to reversals are: (1) dependance on the visual and
auditory structure of words (2) dependence on the presenta-

tion and conception of the words, on the reading and spelling processes involved.

Nancy B. Wood¹ has analyzed the process of language development in children and the language disorders. According to her the major causes for language disorders are (1) deafness or hearing loss, (2) mental retardation, (3) emotional disturbance and (4) central nervous system impairment. Further she classifies the types of language disorders caused by central nervous system impairment as (1) aphasia or dysphasia, (2) alexia or dyslexia, (3) agraphia or dysgraphia, (4) acalculia and (5) amusica. She delineates between the meaning of the different terms. She deals with aphasia in detail and suggests diagnostic and therapeutic measures to overcome this. The other language disorders also have been discussed. Experiments with children having language disorders have also been described by the author.

Diagnosis can be studied not only from the educational point of view, but also from the linguistic point of view. Whorf² has studied very deeply about the connection

between thought and language. Although Whorf has not specifically said anything regarding the diagnosis of language difficulties, he has presented a detailed discussion about thought and classification of gender, particularly English gender. He classifies gender as (1) covert class and (2) overt class, and classifies English gender as a covert class. "A covert linguistic class may not deal with any grand dichotomy of objects, it may have a very subtle meaning, and it may have no overt mark other than certain distinctive 'reactances' with certain overtly marked forms. It is then what I call a Cryptotype".

In contrast to the cryptotype he gives the name phenotype to the linguistic category with a clearly apparent class meaning and a formal mark or morpheme which accompanies it, i.e., the phenotype is the 'classical' morphological category. The author has stated that it can be shown that, in some languages at least, linguistic meaning results from the interplay of phenotypes and cryptotypes; not from phenotypes alone.

Whorf has devoted many pages for the plan and conception of arrangement of language which can be summarised as follows:

A. Sentence (1) Sentence-end marking (2) Sentence-initial marking (3) Intra-sentential linkage (Syntax) (Integrating principle within the sentence) (4) Intra-sentential linkage
(external syntax) (addition of sentences to sentence) (5) prediction (6) Minimum and abbreviated sentences.

B. The word (the word as part of the sentence) (1) Morphology (overt structure) (2) Covert structure and relationship (3) Categories (overt and covert).

The general analyses such as those of Whorf and other linguists and the specific analyses with reference to Hindi given by Kellogg,1 Scholberg2 Kamata Prasad Guru3 were also useful for identifying the possible linguistic elements which might present difficulties to children.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In the foregoing discussion some of the possible ways of diagnosing the difficulties of pupils in actual practice have been mentioned, which will be further elaborated in the review of literature. The investigator had to limit her work to a sizable dimension workable within a reasonable time establishing some significant conclusion. In fixing the scope the investigator has to consider the availability or paucity of tools already available and

studies already conducted and the social and educational climate and need.

As will be evident from the studies already mentioned, diagnosis can be mainly of three types. One of them is the purely clinical type of study. Excellent examples of this type would be the studies of Burt, Schonell etc. The investigator was not able to adopt this type since the necessary tools for this area were not available. Besides, at the initial stage of probing into the subject of diagnosis of difficulties, some generalizations have to be made which will not be possible if we approach the problem purely from a clinician's point of view.

Another type is administering comprehensive diagnostic tests for specific areas. This type of study have been done by Blair, Schonell etc. The investigator did not choose to adopt this type also since it was considered inadvisable to prepare an over-specialized test when the climate for using it is not available in the present educational set-up. Besides, this is an exploratory type of study, the first of its kind of a comprehensive nature in this field in Kerala. Hence it is advantageous to work in breadth rather than in depth. As Schonell\(^1\) himself has stated: "Naturally, this information does not

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\(^1\) F.J. Schonell, op.cit., p.98.
fully and finally solve the problems raised by the pupil's backwardness, but it at least narrows the field, eliminating one possibility after another so effectively that we can proceed to discover reasons why he fails in particular elements of the subject”.

Therefore among the three possible approaches already indicated it was felt that the maximum investment of time would be spent on the analytical aspect yielding a comprehensive diagnostic test which may touch as many areas as possible, but may not be comparable to the Iowa Scale, California Language Test etc. covering specific components of language. But the present study is an analytical one to find out the particular areas of the Hindi Language that are difficult for the pupils of Kerala, which can be worked on further by later investigators. This analytical approach to the difficulties is supplemented by a general approach to the problem. Language difficulties can be studied from three points of view: (1) pupil-point of view – finding out the difficulties of individual pupils (2) the point of view of school conditions (3) error-point of view – analyzing the errors and thus diagnosing difficulties. It is proposed to study the problem mainly from the error-point of view. Consequently, the more important part of the study will be devoted to an analysis of the difficulties of children in terms of different aspects of language.
For this purpose the language was analyzed into ten major areas subdivided further so that altogether 27 sub areas resulted. These areas are: (1) Sentence structure items - identification of subject, object and verb, word order, use in sentences (2) Particles - conjunctions, post-positions (recognition), post-positions (recall) (3) Sandhi (4) Nouns - plurals, genders (5) Pronouns - interrogatives, pronouns, possessive pronouns (declensions) (6) Quality words - abstract nouns, adjectives, adverbs, numerals (7) Verbs - causals, imperatives, auxiliaries, habituals, voice, tenses (8) Grammatical terms (9) Lexical items - meanings, opposites (10) Translation and Comprehension.

In each of the areas, detailed specifications were made out and the most important of them were selected for the test. It was expected that scores obtained by students in these areas would indicate specific aspects in which pupils are particularly weak and need help.

There were however certain areas in which a very careful diagnostic analysis rather than simple scoring (however analytically the items may have been framed) could yield the best results. These include translation, voice, spelling and handwriting. In analyzing handwriting the process errors were also studied through observation of pupils actually engaged in writing. Spelling errors were
studied through the analyses of (1) examination papers of pupils which is time-limited (2) and writings of a given passage which had no time limit.

Apart from the analytical treatment of the type of errors committed, it was considered important to go into the personal and home factors which could cause difficulties in learning Hindi.

Some of these factors were just surveyed in order to get an estimate of the extent to which they are prevalent in our schools - on the assumption that they can operate as a difficulty. In certain cases specific relationship between these factors and the total score obtained in the test were calculated to form an estimate of how far they contribute to backwardness.

Certain differential studies were also included - sex-wise differences in the operation of the factors causing difficulty to pupils. As regards institutional factors the schools were compared on the basis of management (Government, Private) and region.

The investigator has approached the problem also through a detailed study of the methods used in teaching the various linguistic areas - understanding, reading, speaking and writing. The data regarding these were got through separate questionnaires administered to both teachers and
pupils. The administrative factors in the school were also studied.

As already indicated the approach of preparing intense specialized tests on the diagnostic side, and also a clinical approach has been avoided. But it is expected that the use of the approach adopted by the present investigator would just place in the hands of a would-be educational clinician a tool which could be used with individual cases with a reasonable amount of precision to start with and that it would also stimulate the test technicians to prepare specialized tests on each of the sub-areas indicated. Further researchers can work on specific areas such as reading, spelling, oral comprehension, written comprehension, handwriting etc.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This is an overall study, being the first in its type in Kerala. Hence the investigator has not gone to the depth as Gates, Schonell etc. have done. But we are gaining in breadth where we have lost in depth.

Though the diagnostic test prepared in this study is not a highly sophisticated tool comparable to many foreign tests of specific components of language, it is a big advance over the type of tools already available. Hence
use of precise diagnostic tools in the specific components of the language was not possible. Correspondingly precise tools of measuring intelligence, physical tests etc. were not used. This approach was taken on the assumption that a test of this type will reveal areas of weaknesses to be pursued by future investigators and by clinical practitioners with greater depth.

The sample could not be described as strictly representative of the population, particularly in the sex-wise and management-wise distribution. But it is viewed that a sizable sample of the population representing different zones, sexes, locality and management have been brought in under the study to get a wide cross-section of the type of difficulties of pupils. So far as getting a picture of the relative difficulty of the components within the language it is expected that these deviations from proportionate representations do not constitute a serious defect. (Many of the investigators working in the area of diagnosis bother more about tapping the types of possible mistakes than about getting a representative sample of the population of school children).

To the extent that the study covered the type of external conditions - methods, income of parents, physical facilities etc. - this has a survey value also. In such a case an equalized percentage also was given to compensate
a possible biasing factor in the interpretation. The teachers' questionnaire, which is much more closely representative, also serves as a corrective in this dimension.

We have used a kind of simple language in the questionnaire understandable by the teacher, and some of them have been carried on into the discussions of results also in order to be faithful to the phrases to which teachers responded, even though it is possible to present them in more precise and scientifically sophisticated language current among linguists.