CHAPTER 1
CHAPTER I

CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

1.1. Language and Education

1.2. Language of the Child

1.3. First Language vrs. Primary School Instruction.

Summary
CHAPTER I

CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK

1.1. Language and Education

1.1.1. **Language Represents Knowledge and Schooling is Mostly Verbal**

Language as the major medium of learning has been most important concern in formal education. The understanding of concepts in all other content areas grows through language mainly. It is through the use of language that pupils gain knowledge, express feelings, communicate with others. Even in the acquisition of different skills language forms a key role. Dutton and Hockett (1960) state:

As pupils mature and move through the school system they must learn to define their problems, gather necessary facts, organise their ideas, and then communicate with others. Each stage of development should acquire new learnings, increase security in the use of language and improve relationship with class and school. (p. 53)

The nature of school learning is found to be mostly verbal. According to Lewis (1963) education in a modern society is largely the verbalization of behaviour and so the educators are to encourage insight in and train the child to verbalise his
experiences. By this Lewis means that the child has to use words to supplement and then supersede physical acts. This concept of verbalization has now become sophisticated as a principal form of communication skill.

The school achievement or academic achievement is solely dependent on the verbal ability of the children. It is now becoming more and more evident that intelligence tests are generally relying on, 'language ability as an index of intelligence'. A number of studies have shown the existence of high co-relationship between measures of intelligence as well as various measures of language. 'The majority of intelligence tests tend to be largely language tests', says Strickland (1969). Murray (1968) offers the same view by saying, 'Without the use of language the genetic potential of intelligence cannot be fully exploited'. 'Without language there would be little learning', says MacGinitie (1970). Some psychologists, as Bullock Report (1975) says, do claim that the intellectual growth of the child is contingent upon his mastering the social means of thought, i.e. language. Downey and Kelly (1979) expressed a corroborated view that language is a necessary condition
of thought as well as of the development of intelligence. Moreover from the Structurist view point of Piaget and others language is the representation of knowledge. (Open University, 1979).

Such being the relationship between learning and language or intelligence and language, the importance of language in education can never be a mere emphasis. Rather highly developed language skills on the part of the school children are a demand. It is, therefore, a major responsibility of the school to foster and ensure such development in children. While discussing language education of children in school, Lamberto (1974) mentions about the unique role of language in education in general and in the work of school in particular. 'Language education has a centrality in education', writes Pattanayak (in press)* in introducing a 'trend report' of educational research on 'Language Education' and 'more so in multilingual country'.

* Personal Communication.
On the other hand, the highly verbal nature of the modern school is being criticised in some quarters. Even Pestalozzi, the pioneer of modern education, warned against the dangers of empty verbalism for all children. But as Lewis (1963) understands it, the spirit of Pestalozzi's war against verbalism was a battle for the true place of language in the development of every human being. In support of his understanding of Pestalozzi, Lewis quotes Pestalozzi's own version, 'The final end of language is obviously to lead our race from vague sense impression to clear ideas....'. MacGinitie (1969) also asserts, 'Schooling is notoriously verbal.' But he also modifies his own remark by adding, 'In large measures, the verbal nature of education simply reflects necessity', because, 'competence in the modern world demands a high level of ability in language and similar symbolic skills.'

It is also generally experienced that modern verbal culture has put a heavy pressure on every individual to make correct use of language and to understand the meaning of words in different contexts. It is in this context that one is reminded of recommendation 110 of the Bullock Report, as quoted by Richards (1978):

Children should be helped as widely as possible in a range of language uses so that they can speak appropriately in different situations and use standard forms when they are needed (p. 127).
1.1.2. **Language of Schooling**:

Now a fundamental question emerges here as to what language is that which plays so important a role in school learning. There is, of course, consensus in the answer to this question. They only answer in different terms. For example, some call it 'mother tongue', some 'native language/tongue' and for some it is the 'first language'. Barring exceptional and peculiar situations, all these three terms mean one and the same thing for the children in school. The last term, 'first language' is a recent coinage. Since school learning in modern times involves more than one language, either including or excluding 'mother/native tongue', for the teaching—learning purpose the languages are assigned with numbers, like: 'L-1' (first language), 'L-2' (second language), 'L-3' (third language) and the like. In such assignment the 'mother/native tongue' is the 'first language/L-1'. The first language is the child's own language. This, he brings with him to the school as the foundation for educational development that gets actualised through the process of school learning.

1.1.3. **Child's Language Background When Entering School**:

As a matter of fact, when entering into formal learning, the child is already in possession of an
informal capital of his own language. This informal capital at the entrance level is said to be considerable credit with the child. Such 'language background' of the child is recognised as the 'mastery of basic structure'. In other words the child is 'well along with one of life's major enterprises - learning the language' (Trauger, 1963). Perhaps with such conviction about the child's language background the Piagetians (Duckworth, 1974) are of the opinion that:

.....there is no need to give children 'language tools' in order to facilitate clear thinking, intelligence, or greater knowledge and that their own use of language will always be adequate for their own thinking. (p.149)

Palmer (1971) also contended that the native language is learnt, but it is hardly taught at all, because children acquire all these skills before they reach school stage. While discussing the acquisition of the mother tongue Regan (1972) concludes, 'the mother tongue is not so much taught as it is learned'. Fry (1977) also advocates, 'the task of learning our mother tongue.... is one which we accomplish essentially in the first five years of our life'. But this assumption that children should already have mastered their mother tongue before they come to school, 'is fast dying', conclude Downey and Kelly (1979) basing upon

1.1.4.1. Formal Learning of Mother Tongue:

The child has, however, to be taught his mother/native tongue formally. This is normally an admitted fact. Although Palmer denies this, he otherwise agrees that the child has to learn to use 'written symbols' in place of 'speech'. This, perhaps, is normally not possible without the child being taught. The Piagetians also indirectly support such a view. In their opinion the 'linguistic style' and 'correct language' are important factors in communicating with others with facility and ease. They further say that although there is no denying of children's speaking capability, still they do speak in their own way. The children can make themselves understood by their speech, but their speech may not be 'elegant'; their language may not be 'standard' language; people may take such flaws as exception. It can be deduced from their views that children have to acquire 'standard' language. This again is impossible without children being taught, either formally or informally. Here it is worth mentioning Lewis's (1963) view:

......a child's language is an intricate pattern of habits deeply rooted in his personal history and permeating every moment of his life. The linguistic education
The above view of Lewis is based upon a strong notion. He thinks that the language of the child is, in a sense, a building. This building is subject to demolition, if not completely but partially. Again, this building has to be 'rebuilt' as well as 'enlarged' during the formal learning in school. Such demolition, rebuilding and enlargement, according to Lewis, are to be based on the 'blue print' prepared by the experts in the 'architectonics' of education. Petty and Jensen (1980) have also the same views on this issue. They say that the language children bring to school has to undergo improvement and refinement. So, improving and refining children's language is the prime task of school education.

It is, therefore, certain that children entering school do possess some degree of linguistic competence. This they acquire automatically. This degree of linguistic competence varies from child to child due to their varied linguistic environments. It is also certain that their linguistic competence has to be broadened and strengthened through the formal teaching-learning programmes of school. That is, in school every child should be helped to attain a desired range of language. For
this the school has to provide opportunities to learn and practise new forms of language appropriate to the functional demand, either of the school itself or of different social situations. This is an open claim from all quarters. To meet this claim is the task of education.

1.1.4.2. Literacy and Oracy:

The fact that children begin school education with a certain amount of linguistic competence and that their linguistic competence has to be broadened and strengthened leads to two questions. One may be apt to ask as to what part of linguistic competence is automatically learned and what part is left for the school to teach. According to Palmer (1971), 'At the age of five a normal child has almost complete mastery of the phonetics, phonology, grammar and semantics of his own language' and so in school, 'the child has to be taught to read and write'. Lewis (1963) is explicit about the school part in the following statements:

The language of the school is relatively complex in structure and abstract in meaning. Learning to read and write initiates the child into a language which has a structure and vocabulary of its own; it also influences those of his spoken language. Together, the spoken and written language constitute a system
for the symbolization of abstract thinking, a system which serves not only the child's cognitive development but equally his social and ethical development. (p. 227-228)

As is understood from his statement Lewis advocates the inclusion of all the three - reading, writing and speaking - in the school work. Regan (1972) sees this problem on different terms. According to him the language learning, like all learning, is 'perception of usefulness'. A child during the automatic first years of life learns the usefulness of language. The child gets interested in language and is also confronted, 'by the fact that language is a tool by which mankind orders life'. Thus one part of the child's 'perception of usefulness' is automatically acquired along with the mother tongue. But its 'higher forms' are taught to the child. Regan, however, does not say anything clearly about the 'higher forms'. But from Lewis's statement that school language is 'relatively complex in structure and abstract in meaning' it is understood as to which higher form of the language the child has to be taught. This has also been worded in a different way that when the children enter school they are put into an environment where there is specific pedagogic interaction, unfamiliar to them. This is more so in so far as the school language and the child are concerned. (Open University, 1979). It would be more clear in the words of
Troike (1982) that usually in school only children's language development takes place at a 'technical level'. By this Troike means that language development in school children is explicit and conscious.

The speaking, reading and writing through which the children have to learn or have to be taught the higher forms of their own language are recognised as the media of language learning. To these is also added another important medium, 'listening'. While discussing the medium of the first language learning Wilkinson (1979) includes these four media under two broad media: 'literacy' (reading and writing) and 'oracy' (listening and speaking). On the other hand, since a language learner has to 'produce' language and 'receive' language as well, the above media are also discussed under 'production' and 'reception' of language, by Wilkinson. He presents these media in the following diagram:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LITERACY</th>
<th>PRODUCTION</th>
<th>RECEPTION</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORACY*</td>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>Listening</td>
</tr>
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</table>

* The term 'Oracy' is the coinage of Wilkinson (1979, p.235) which corresponds to 'Literacy'. Previously it was known as aural-oral skills.
'Literacy' and 'Oracy' are the two main aims of the first language learning. Making pupils literate is the traditional aim of the first language learning. The traditional meaning of making pupils literate is to make them able to read and write, that is, to acquire the basic skills. This may be true in case of an illiterate adult who makes himself/herself literate. But for children's language-education-programme literacy means many more things than mere reading and writing. According to Wilkinson (1979) literacy provides the 'corner-stone' of the educational edifice. The reasons Wilkinson offers for such high importance of literacy in the educational programme are:

(i) it is the basis of learning in other school subjects;
(ii) it bears the traditional prestige; (iii) it is the key to employment and advancement in professions;
(iv) 'it is the key to store certain types of traditional wisdom and literature'; (v) 'it is a medium in which ratiocination has time to operate'; and (vi) it also facilitates 'the time for and the possibility of viewing, weighing, reconsidering deeply'.

Oracy, on the other hand, in mother tongue/first language, as has already been discussed, is said to have developed in children independent of formal schooling. It is also a general feeling that oracy is not so much a required skill for the majority of people either in
working situation or for social and political roles. That is why, perhaps, the curriculum builders never bothered for that and as a matter of fact it is the most neglected part of the school curriculum. But in reality a sound development of oracy in children is never accomplished except in few cases of children having a good informal language background. Again, the recent discovery of psychological and linguistic studies prove a close relationships between thought and speech as well as between speech and growth of personality. So, there is demand for higher potency of oracy than the oral system the children already possess automatically. This is also true in the sense that we are already in the direction of oral culture representing the radio, television, telephone, etc. which lay greater emphasis on oracy. It is, therefore, no wonder that circumstances are being envisaged where 'an educational system might choose to base its education on oracy' (Wilkinson, 1979).

The foregoing discussions, however, give balanced treatment to both literacy and oracy - the two broad media of first language education in the educational process of the children.

1.1.4.3 Hierarchical Order of Language Skills:

The dependence of academic achievement on verbal
ability undoubtedly substantiates the importance of language in school. It is also clear from this that the school has the vital responsibility to foster the development of language skills. 'Developing skill in the use of language', say Petty and Jensen (1980), is the foundation of school curriculum. Of course, 'skills' here mean all the four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing, the first two being oracy and the last two, literacy.

As already discussed, the present day situation demands that oracy should receive more attention in school learning. Since oracy is already an established ability, in some degree or so, in the child joining school, the part to be played here by the school is in terms of 'refinement' of the child's oracy and its strengthening. While discussing the school and language, Downey and Kelly (1978) suggest that the children at school have to learn rules governing forms of address to the teachers, appropriate vocabulary, grammatical structure and pronunciation that are acceptable. In other words the oral language development that takes place through formal education is primarily 'new vocabulary, new rules for speaking practice, in interpretation and use of a more formal style, and skills for public performance' (Troike, 1982). On the other hand, literacy - reading and writing are rather recognised
as the primary responsibility of the School. Reading and writing are altogether new skills which the school has to teach the children anew and also to establish these skills in them for good. That is, the school has to place the maximum emphasis on acquiring 'a new channel of communication' - 'the written language skills'.

To discuss the place of language skills in the other way one is reminded of their interrelationship. All of them constitute the language arts and all are interrelated. In Dutton and Hockett's (1960) words, 'The language arts are a pattern of interrelated skills'. It is also said, 'language is like a rope woven of many strands, the strength of each adding to the strength of the whole' (Petty and Jensen, 1980).

From the discoveries made by psycholinguists and linguists it is learned that there is a hierarchical order or sequence of the four language skills. The infant's first contact with the language is by its sound which the infant happens to listen to. Listening, therefore, is the first acquired skill. It is then succeeded by speaking which the child naturally acquires early in life. Thus both these skills are
acquired or learned by the child automatically. The other two skills: reading and writing, may be learned by the child, if taught, simultaneously, at one stage of his development. Still writing, at least effective writing, is bound to be preceded by reading. Writing is certainly the highest one of all the four language skills and it is, therefore, a higher skill than reading. Since writing skill involves extra motor development besides what is involved in reading on the part of the child, teaching reading prior to writing is found to be good. However, in this hierarchical order of learning language skills each one provides a stepping stone to arrive at the other easily.

So, in the approach to formal teaching in school, reading is bound to precede writing. As has been observed, children beginning schooling take greater interest in reading than in writing because they find it easier.

1.1.5.1. Importance of Reading:

It has been found out by Breen that the child's reading-test-score at the end of the first grade and second grade is highly correlated with both reading and arithmetic achievement three years later. Upon this MacGinitie (1969) concludes that early mastery of
reading is very crucial for success in school as it new functions.

The importance of reading in the present day practical world ("we are rarely out of sight of printed materials challenging us to read.") as well as for vocation ("Few if any vocation are open to non-readers."), the essentiality of reading to good citizenship especially in a democracy ("only the informed person can understand the many complex responsibilities of the good citizen today.") and the indispensibility of reading for success in school (".....reading is the most efficient and to a large extent the only practical means of learning much that the school has to teach.") are not the matter to be explained but are things of realisation (Dutton & Hockett, 1960).

Learning to read in one's own language, it is said, is a somewhat easy task in the sense that it is nothing but a shift or transfer from already learned (auditory) signs to new (visual or graphic) signs of the same language signals - the signals of reception (Fries, 1974). In Palmer's (1971) view the child has to learn to use written symbols in place of speech of the same language. Wilkinson (1975)
also states that to learn reading a child has not
to learn a new language but merely to substitute
'graphic' for 'phonic' symbols. But although talking
and reading have the same set of language signals
for reception they are distinctly two different
language skills. If talking is an already acquired
skill, reading is a new skill to be acquired—an
addition of a new skill to the credit of the child.
Still then it has been argued that the adding of a
skill in language reception through reading to an
already required skill in language reception through
talk should not be difficult nor give rise to any
confusion or frustration. This new skill on the part
of the child does not also require any more intelli-
gence than that is necessary to talk.

Such a supposition certainly conceives of a
strong background of oral language skill. Fries (1963)
says that any child can learn to read 'within a year
after he has learned to "talk" his native language
satisfactorily.' By 'satisfactorily' the author means
the 'oral language control' of the child 'must be
without baby-talk deviations'; the child 'can report
what he has consciously experienced'; and 'he can
understand talk to him which uses only the materials
that lie within the range of his linguistic and socio-
cultural experience'. And also for making the new
skill -the job of reading- easy for the child so as to learn it successfully, it is necessary that the 'essential materials' for practice are 'properly selected and arranged in a series of small steps each of which is thoroughly learned in its sequence', suggests Fries (1963).

1.1.5.2. **Pre-requisite of Reading Skill**:

From the foregoing discussion two things emerge as the pre-requisite for organising teaching-learning of reading skill in school. One is the knowledge about the child's 'oral language control' while entering school and the other is the selection of suitable as well as matchable materials to be presented to the child for reading.

It is, therefore, necessary on the part of the teachers, educators, text-writers and experts in the field to be aware of the general trend of language development of children entering the fold of formal education of school inspite of the fact that the oral language control of the child is beyond the control of the school in as much as each child considerably differs from the other in this respect. Only such knowledge can provide guide lines for organising
'structure and content of reading series', say Goodman et al (1966). Also, 'Successful instruction in beginning reading is usually dependent on the child's oral language', say Otto et al (1974). Several linguists suggest, that as children do use their knowledge of language in reading to predict what kinds of words are likely to come in a particular place of reading matter (Open University, 1979), it is imperative for the language programme of the school to be based on or rather to be related to the child's 'oral language control'.

1.1.5.3. Selection of Language Learning Materials:

The other one, that is the provision of suitably matchable reading materials for the children in school is also a widely recognised matter. Providing a graded sequence of reading materials for children is, indeed, an important part of the modern reading programme. More and more attention is being given to how the children can maintain a steady growth in reading skills so as to attack increasingly mature materials without being overwhelmed by too many difficulties at any time.

The general truth about good teaching is that it tries to minimise difficulties, in anything to be learned, which may impede the learning of the
children. Especially in the beginning reading stages everything should be made easy for the hard job of reading symbols, suggests McCullough (1964). He explains this with a very simple example: when a father has to teach his son to ride a bicycle, he has to choose a traffic-free-level-ground. McCullough concludes that such is also the principle to be adopted for teaching reading to the beginners.

It is, however, not an easy task to select text and other materials, especially the language materials, for use in teaching reading to the beginners. Language being a very complex system it has always been the most difficult problem for those concerned to teach it systematically, observes Jeffery (West, 1953) and 'random selection' of language materials is 'a wasteful approach' in teaching language, he adds. In a similar context Barker (Ahmed, 1973) observes that to guess at this would lead to pedagogical mistakes and result in difficulties for the students.

The philosophy of selection and gradation of teaching-learning materials is an age-old one. Such a claim is even traced to the western educational philosopher, Comenius. It was he who first
established systematic principles of gradation, reports Mackey (1978). According to Comenius a systematic gradation reduces the difficulties of language learning, meaning thereby distribution of extensive language materials into steps arranged in specially prepared texts. Only such texts are capable of ensuring progress in the learners, 'not by leaps and bounds but gradually'. At least for foundational level teaching-learning, this is a must.

Mackey (1978) points out that all language teaching methods have four inherent characteristics: selection, gradation, presentation and repetition. He has strong and valid arguments in support of this view. Since it is impossible to teach the whole field of knowledge it is rather imperative to select some part of it for a certain purpose, level and duration of teaching. This holds good in so far as language teaching is concerned because, 'No method can teach the whole of a language'. Similarly the part of materials selected for teaching can not be taught at once. Since 'knowledge must necessarily come in successive steps and proficiency is acquired only by degrees', for the purpose of good and effective teaching any language can be
divided into degrees of difficulty in such a way as to encourage any learner to learn 'rapidly, agreeably and thoroughly'. It has, indeed, been found that when a learner finds that everything is presented in a regular smooth and systematic manner, the desire in him to proceed ahead is naturally increased. Once the materials are selected and graded the question of presentation arises. Here comes the mode of communication of materials. There may be careful selection and sequential gradation of the materials, but if those are not communicated effectively learning is sure to be impeded. The last one is the principle of repetition which is a must, at least for the young learners. No skill whether informal or formal, is learned from a single instance. It requires practice, time and again. 'Practice makes man perfect' holds entirely good in the formative period of man—in the child.

The material here means language which is at once a system and a structure. The language system is made of sounds, words, phrases and meanings. When these are fitted sequentially into structures they form the proper communication system. To work out these linguistic principles for teaching
any language, the linguistic study of the target language is a must. Following the findings of the linguistic studies of the target language, the language materials are carefully selected, sequentially graded, well presented in the texts and provision for systematic repetition is made. But such materials may not be suitable for the learners if the learners' capability level is not taken into consideration.

Matching language text materials to the language competence of children to determine what language they must learn so that they can adjust to reading materials without difficulty, is a tremendous task to accomplish. Those who are interested in producing reading materials for children have to look to the child's language. Barbe (1965) in mentioning the preparation of reading materials for all levels of ability, suggests that information about the experiences, the interests, the needs, the background and information already possessed by the readers is necessary. A good language programme must not leave to chance the determination and development of the abilities needed in children, rather it must provide for their introduction and instruction in a systematic fashion, says Petty (1965). There is little dispute on such issues.
A great many educational programmes for language development of children in school basing upon the findings of advanced studies on linguistics, psycholinguistics, study on children's vocabulary/structures etc. envisaging controlled materials for reading, especially in pre-primary and primary levels, have been launched, if not in this country (India), at least in advanced countries like, USA and UK. But as has recently been observed by Robinson (1981-82) some of these programmes have failed utterly. Such failures have been classified under six items. The first such item according to Robinson's observation is:

The contents and/or materials of the curriculum are not matched closely enough to the contemporary knowledge, understanding, values or motivation of children. Materials, for example, were some-times unfamiliar or too advanced or too elementary. (p.30)

So far as this country (India) is concerned, systematic studies under linguistics, psycholinguistics as well on children's vocabulary/structures are yet to be conducted upon which matchable first language instructional programme can be launched.
1.2. Language of the Child

1.2.1. Language - A Product of Biological Inheritance and Social Experience:

'Child is a born speaker and born into a world of speakers', says Lewis (1963).

By 'born speaker' the author means that child is potentially a speaker, that is he has the innate capacities to speak and has also the roots of linguistic growth in him. In Menyuk's phrase it is the 'bins and structure' of the human mind (Open University, 1979). That a child vocalises and responds to sound is an observable truth. Even on the very first day of life a child often shows awareness of sound. Recent investigations have termed this as 'auditory orienting reflex' which means a movement of the child's head towards the source of sound. Gradually such behaviour of the child becomes more specific and is demonstrated more and more readily and regularly (Lewis, 1971). In other words, the human child has the biological uniqueness of language. (Open University, 1979).

The other statement, 'world of speakers' is meant to be social uniqueness of language of the human society to which the child is born and in which
he lives and grows.

Both these uniquenesses - 'biological' and 'social' - determine the concrete form and usage of the language of the child. It is an everyday show that the society presents the child with an environment filled with numerous sounds of different languages. Lewis (1963) while reviewing Templin's study found that both innate capacity and environmental conditions combine to produce the progressive mastery of linguistic form in the child. The social environment constantly acts upon the inborn potentialities of the child and vice-versa. The result of this is the growth of language - the first language or the native language or the mother tongue.

1.2.2. **Difference between Child Language and Adult Language**:

The language of the child, however, is not the language of the adult in so far as language-proper is concerned. This does not of course mean that the child's language and adult's language are altogether two different languages. They are one and the same language. The difference between these two is in the degree of quality and quantity. Here it is worth
mentioning Rousseau's statement that a child is not a miniature adult and his mind not the mind of an adult on a small scale. This has been also confirmed with evidence by Piaget, who revolutionised the knowledge about child language and thought (Vygotsky, 1962). Piaget provided the idea of the evolution that the child language undergoes to arrive at the stage of adult language which is a vastly complex system.

It has been observed that during infancy the child's speech is primitive and rudimentary. Within a very short span of time in the social world, the child is able to acquire a sort of 'linguistic means' for communication although the means is very much inadequate for the purpose. But sooner or later, depending upon the quality and quantity of environmental feedback, the child gains mastery of language - a finer, a more adjustable instrument of communication and thought. More and more the child becomes aware of and sensitive to the increasingly linguistic environment in and around him.

1.2.3. The 'baby-talk' - its development:

Every common man at least knows about 'baby-talk'. Mothers are heard teaching their children, 'baby-talk'. Very often in a family there is discussion on 'baby's first word' or a small child's
learning 'new words'. Some times the family members eagerly wait to listen to the 'first-word' from the baby's mouth. Even they put on lots of pressure on the child to produce the word. Frequently the word is fed to the child by the mother or other family members with the hope that the child would imitate the same. The child, indeed, produces the same much to the delight of all concerned. Here, 'the sound of adult speech acts as a trigger'. It is not a 'model for imitation'—(Fry, 1977). But one thing to be noted here is that the child is able to produce the first word, may be by being triggered through adult speech sound, only when he is ready to produce the word. Whatever pressure the adult members put on a child to produce a word will not act upon a child until he is ready for that. There is a point of time in the child's life for this. This time has been estimated, through different studies of child language, to be in between nine months to eighteen months of the child's life. Prior to this time and since his birth the child is in the process of readiness of being able to produce language— the child language. This process includes 'crying', 'cooing', 'gurgling' and 'babbling' sounds produced by the child. Among all these sounds that help the child for preparation to produce the
language, 'babbling' ('ba-ba-ba-ba......') is
the closest sound to any language. Babbling is
said to be 'streams of sound of one sort or another,
repeating syllables over and over again and stringing
them together' (Fry, 1977). Babbling is also said
to be 'playing with talking'. It is commonly
believed that the child utters babbling sounds for
gaining pleasure or for the sake of fun and that it
has no reference to the world around. But experts
opine that through babbling the child explores the
possibilities of the sound producing apparatus.
Through babbling the child learns just what can be
done with the larynx, tongue, soft palate, lips.
He practises the actions through continual repeti-
tion of babbling sound. In other words it is,'exploring the possibilities of the talking box that
nature has provided' with the human child (Fry, 1977).
The babbling sound are not the sounds that pertain
to any particular language of the world. But producing
such sounds repeatedly is a general practice which
helps the child to learn the sounds of his own language-
mother tongue/ native tongue/first language. Babbling
is also not the imitation of adults' sound. It is
only that the adults' voice sets the baby babbling
with his own repertoire of sounds and the baby goes
on into his own routine. On the other hand babbling
is a clear indication that the child is rapidly
approaching the time to get himself involved with 'speech' - the vehicle for language, although no real language has yet come to the picture. It is because, 'The baby's babbling takes place in a private world', whereas, 'the essence of language lies in its connection with the world outside the speaker'.

Since the social forces constitute the raison d'etre of language it is no wonder that the human child feels the urge to be admitted into the club of 'homo loquens'. At a fairly definite point of time babbling is triggered by an adult's sound to become speech. In most cases it is the mother's voice that so triggers the child's babbling into speech - the language itself. This is the underlying principles of speech and language acquisition. This otherwise means that 'reception runs ahead of production'. This trick of language acquisition has two parts. The first part is, 'noises stand for things'. The second part is, 'different noises stand for different things'. The 'noises' are known as 'words'. Everything in the world has a name. This name is practically uttered through word(s). The 'noises' or 'words' or 'names', stand for different things, are operated through the 'phoneme system' of a particular language. The child acquires the 'phoneme system' of his mother
tongue not all on a sudden but step by step. The continuous reception of different noises in the child's brain helps the child to form the 'acoustic cues' to distinguish and/or recognise different sounds stand for different names or words. The experience of continuous reception and/or recognition of different sounds exerts influence on the articulation/production of sound on the part of the child. There is an inevitable lag between these steps. This lag diminishes considerably, shortly after the child experiences the articulation/production or when the child reaches the stage of 'verbalisation of experience'.

The first 'verbalisation of experience' a child has, in most cases, is the simple sound/word, 'mama' or any other nearer to such sound, which denotes 'mother' who is the source of all good things for the child. This occurs by imitation. Subsequently such simple syllables like: |dādā|, |bābā|, |pāpā|, |nānā| are verbalised. In a general sense all such verbalisation occurs through imitation and that too through the imitation of the mother's speech mainly.

As time goes on the child tries to recognise a wider and wider range of things and other people's speeches and also tries to produce them. But still the
child is unable to bring about a perfect match of imitated sound in his own speech. Thus for quite some time the child has to remain with the 'childish pronunciation'. Also for quite some time the child finds trouble in pronouncing some of the sounds of the language. The followings are some examples of childish pronunciation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Childish pronunciation</th>
<th>Correct pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Quoted from Fry, 1977, pp.26-27)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>pudiatat</td>
<td>pussy cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iku gogi</td>
<td>little goggie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bano</td>
<td>piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dohin</td>
<td>dolphin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>budlozer</td>
<td>bulldozer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cocker bisik</td>
<td>chocolate biscuit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chain</td>
<td>train</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>creeks</td>
<td>cheeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>satrel</td>
<td>satchel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>treve</td>
<td>twelve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trist</td>
<td>twist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trinkle trinkle</td>
<td>twinkle twinkle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childish pronunciation</td>
<td>Correct pronunciation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ORIYA CHILD</strong></td>
<td><strong>(the author's occasional observation of children's speech)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<p>| | |</p>
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</table>

Such childish pronunciation is considered as a 'speech defect', known as 'lisping', by some psychologists. Panda (1979) enlisted 'lisping' as one of the speech defects and mentioned that this happens due to defective teeth, jaw or fascination for using 'Baby Speech'. He also added that lisping decreases with the appearance of 'permanent teeth' in the child. Since appearance of permanent teeth is a fact of motor development in the child in the normal course of time, lisping for a normal child
may be taken as 'childish pronunciation' under 'Baby Speech'.

It is said that while the pronunciation of the child is mainly due to pressure of the phoneme system of the language concerned still it is normally the result of imitation of the mother's speech. The child, however, increasingly tries to embody his own sounds - the cues - he uses in recognition. Some times the child's embodiment of a particular sound and/or the cues he uses for its recognition do not seem to coincide although the child is convinced about the correctness of production and recognition of the same sound. This can be well illustrated with the following experience of conversation of the author with a child (girl) of about two years of age:

- pointing to the author's 'scooter' the child spoke 'e...e...sutal'
- the author repeating the the child's speech, asked - 'sutal ?'
- the child then said 'umhu (No) sutal.'
- then the author said 'o.....skutar (scooter) ?'
- the child
'hmhu (Yes) um (Yes) sutal.'
Some times it is not easy to decode such childish pronunciation by adult listeners if the child does not have to point to the object with the speech or if the speech denotes an abstract word. In such cases the mother is the best interpreter of her child's language to the rest of the world. A similar illustration will explain this view. This was the experience of the author's friend who has narrated her experience of conversation with a child (girl) of about twenty two months, to him during a discussion on child's language. The same is illustrated below:

- the author's friend : |to nā kaŋ ? | (what's your name ?)
- the child : |āhu əhā| (denoting a sound in ORIYA)
- the author's friend : |to nā kaŋ əhu əhā ?| (is your name əhu əhā?)
- the child : |uŋən...əhu...əhā...| (no no, əhu...........əhā)

[at this point the child's mother interfered and told the author's friend : |tā nā Suŋhā| (her name is SUDHĀ)]

- the author's friend : |oh, to nā Sudhā| (oh, your name is Sudhā) (to the child)
- the child : |hum...əhu əhā| (yes, əhu əhā)
Growth of Vocabulary:

By the time a child masters a handful of words in speech, he has already a good comprehension of many words heard but which the child unable to use in speech. This is, according to Leneberg (1972) 'priority of language comprehension over language production.'

Another important feature of child language is that the lower the range of number of articulated words with the child the greater is the variety of meaning the child attaches to a single word under command. For example, at the first instance, the meaning attached to the word, |bāpā| (father) is not only 'own father' but 'any man' the child happens to see. The following illustrations will also explain this thing clearly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILD's SPEECH</th>
<th>DIFFERENT MEANINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mā ......dada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mā ......dudu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Mother, give me milk.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A similar illustration is found from Fry (1977) as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILD'S SPEECH</th>
<th>DIFFERENT MEANINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mumy coat</td>
<td>1. 'That's mumy's coat'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. 'Where is mumy's coat'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. 'Mumy should put her coat on so that we can go out'. (pp. 28-29)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The importance of child language lies with his two-words-together expression involving some sort of grammar. Fry (1977) termed it as a 'mini-system'. Of the 'two-words-together' expression one is an 'operator-word' and the other is a 'naming word'. It has been observed with the ORIYA child expressing his desire with a single 'operator-word' like |de| (give), |ne| (take), |ā| (come), |cāl| (let us go), |khāi| (I ate/I am eating/I shall eat). For some time this mini-system serves the purpose of communication of the child, but soon the child extends his technique to three or four word strings. Gradually the child gives up the practice of imitation and tries to develop a pattern of his own. The child now tries to grasp the principle underlying the use of verbs and nouns. From now onward the child tries to use the new words according to their functions in the language as far as practicable.
Systematic observation of children's speech during this period of language development produces convincing evidence that child's brain starts formulating the principles of the grammar of the language. The child applies them in a general way which sometimes does not correspond to the usage of the adult language. For example, the use of 'ed' in the past tense of verb, the use of 'er' in comparatives, the use of 's/es' to get plural forms of words, e.g., 'rided', 'gooder', 'mouses' etc. may not be appropriate. But it is not that the child has not yet learned the grammar. It is rather said that the child has learned the grammar or that the child has at least inferred the law and has generalised the same with all the new words learned (Fry, 1977).

Along with the learning of new words development of grammar and syntax takes place in the language of the child. As far as the learning of new words is concerned all of them form the 'passive vocabulary' of the child at the first instance. But soon the child becomes eager enough to use them according to the urge of increasing needs of communication with others. So, very soon the stock of 'active vocabulary' of the child also begins to increase.
It has been discovered that all the words enter into the human 'brain dictionary', fall into a number of different 'word-classes', such as: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, preposition, conjunctions and interjections. The words in the last four classes have a fixed number of item, whereas the words in other classes are quite large. The number of words in different classes is, however, proportional to some extent. The highest number of words belong to the noun-class. Next to the noun-class is the verb-class and then adjectives and then the adverb and others. It has also been found that the child's language development reflects such proportion of words in the different word classes. Fry (1977) stated this fact in the following statement. The child,

......begins by amassing a comparatively large stock of nouns and only one or two verbs; then about the age of two he will generally enlarge his stock of verbs rather rapidly, though the number will never equal that of nouns. At this stage he will know a few adjectives, perhaps an adverb or two and one or two interrogative words such as what and where ..... A child does not find it easy even to understand the meaning of preposition, for example, and he therefore does not use them in an early stage of his language learning. At the age of about two he may learn a few, such as to, in and or, but it will be a long time before he can use words like under, behind and before. In a similar way he will use the word and quite early, but he will be at the stage of putting together complex sentences before he can handle but, if and though. Upto the age two or more, a child refers to himself by name and in the third person and therefore pronouns
Shanker (1978) stated that in the early vocabulary of a child 'nouns' predominate. Quoting Watt's study Shanker mentioned that all the vocabulary of a child at fifteen months are nouns and that at twenty months 78% are nouns. Watt's study, Shanker stated further, revealed that this proportion changes as the child grows and at about 2 years of age the child uses 63% nouns, 23% verbs and the rest 24% of words belongs to the other parts of speech. Such dominance of nouns in the vocabulary of a young child has been reasoned out by Shanker as that child's interest and attention being in concrete objects, the sequence of the child's learning is naturally from concrete to abstract. But from the findings of McCarthy, as quoted by Shanker, a considerably deviated proportion of parts of speech is found in the vocabulary of children of age groups of 4-4½ years old, as would be seen from the following figures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PART OF SPEECH</th>
<th>UPPER OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL</th>
<th>LOWER OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nouns</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbs</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjectives</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xx</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>xx</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Shanker, 1978, p.46, Table II)
Whatever may be the proportional deviation of the parts of speech in children's vocabulary it is clear that there is relative importance in them and that with the growth of vocabulary the proportion of different parts of speech changes. Such change, it is said, is dependent upon the environment, interest and mental grip of the child. Drever (quoted from Watt's study by Strickland, 1957) said, 'environment affects the nouns, interest affects the verbs, and mental grip is shown by pronouns, adverbs, prepositions and conjunctions'. In reviewing Templin's study Lewis (1963) restated Templin's conclusion regarding the use of parts of speech that after the age of three the parts of speech show little change. Lewis confirmed that Templin's conclusion is in agreement with other studies also.

1.2.5. Type and Size of Vocabulary:

Another aspect of the child language is the size of the vocabulary. Innumerable attempts have been made to measure the size of the vocabulary of children of different ages. But there appear great discrepancies in the estimated size of children's vocabularies by different estimators. Many are also the factors that contribute to such differences in the estimation. Such
factors are known as, 'kind of vocabulary measured', 'the operational definition of word adopted', 'the type of vocabulary test used'. (Templin, 1971)

So far as kinds of vocabulary in child language are concerned they are broadly two. One is the 'vocabulary of use' and the other is the 'vocabulary of understanding'. In other words they are 'production vocabulary' and 'recognition vocabulary'. Some also name them as 'Active' and 'Passive' vocabularies respectively. The first one consists of words used or produced in oral or written speech whereas the second one consists of words recognised or understood when heard or read. Both such vocabularies are not exclusively separate, rather they do overlap substantially. Although the estimation of the number of vocabulary does differ from estimator to estimator one thing that is clearly seen is that the individual's 'vocabulary of understanding' is always larger than his 'vocabulary of use', may he be an infant or child or an adult. Templin (1971) states, 'The vocabulary of understanding is the larger from infancy on'. Fry (1977) supports such views with the following statement:

One often hears a mother say about her baby at a certain stage, 'He understands everything you say to him' and she is implying that he can not yet say all that he understands......(p.25)
Robinson (1981-82) also supports this view by saying that the hypothetical average child at six years of age may well use over 2000 words and understands some meanings of over 10,000.

In course of time, however, the child transfers some of his passive vocabulary into active one. Fry (1977) gives a rough estimate of active vocabulary of an average child at different ages as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE OF THE CHILD</th>
<th>NO. OF ACTIVE VOCABULARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>200 different words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>1000 different words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>2000 different words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such estimate of vocabulary, as Robinson (1981-82) puts it, 'cannot be more than rough', because there is the multiplicity of senses for many individual words and because there are differences in what we can recognise with varying degrees of contextual support and what we can produce when left to our own devices. It is also observed that elementary school children frequently understand one meaning of a word when they hear or read it but do not understand the same word when they hear or read the same in a different context with different meaning.
1.3. First Language Vrs. Primary School Instruction

1.3.1. The Problem of Instruction:

Providing effective language instruction at the primary grades is one of main problems of primary school instruction. The problem is that of creating a suitable match between children's linguistic patterns and the patterns reflected in instructional materials prepared for them (Bergan and Dunn, 1976). The claim that normal English children informally attain a fairly rich system of linguistic knowledge by 5 or 6 years of age, that is before they are initiated to formal instruction, is yet to be established about their counterparts in India. But so far as formal instruction is concerned it is universally claimed that the linguistic experience of the child is to be so organised as to facilitate the effective formal learning of the native language (Hornstein and Lightfoot, 1981). This claim is based on the findings that a child is dependent upon the proper opportunity and experience for learning the language (Strickland, 1957). Such a dependence is necessitated due to children's own ignorance of and incompetence in formal use of language (Robinson, 1981-82).
1.3.2. The Basic Textbooks:

Formal learning of the mother tongue begins with the learning of the written forms of the language by means of reading materials. In school the children are presented with the written symbols of their own language. So, the question as to what reading materials may be used to help children learn more efficiently through reading is a pertinent one. The answers offered to such a question mainly focus on the 'basic textbooks' which provide the most important source for learning the mother tongue formally at the primary school (Klausmeier & Dresden, 1962). The basic textbooks are otherwise named as 'basal readers'. Such readers are generally prepared keeping in view the grade level of children. All children are expected to read the basic reader meant for their grade level.

But with the advent of Piaget's theory of 'matching the instructional material to the cognitive structure of the child' (McNally, 1973) which ultimately aims at individualisation of instruction, the entire western academic community, especially in UK and USA, began to feel that 'one basic text per grade' is no longer adequate to challenge the reading abilities of all children of the grade (Huck, 1967). They began to think in terms of bringing the skill subjects under 'Computer Control'
in a deep and organised way and presenting them to students in an effective and efficient manner and with a degree of individualisation in ordinary classroom teaching (Olsen, 1967).

Still some of them are sceptic about the present status of technology and educational resources as well. They are of the opinion that the idea of individualisation of instruction is a 'futuristic and fanciful' one in as much as Piaget's theory is a 'forbidden one' in practice (McNally, 1973). The UNESCO Institute's survey on the conditions of 'mother tongue teaching' from 'some nine countries', conducted in the late sixties (1969) presents a very clear picture of this. In the most affluent countries, like USA, it is observed that (Applebee, 1972), the Basal Readers are still the 'staple diet' in the classroom and the main tendency is 'to have a given class read a common book'. It has also been stated that the staple of activities in most elementary classroom in USA consists of 'controlled experiences' and that there is no evidence of developing different programmes for primary school students of differing abilities. Huck (1967) also reports that in America basic readers are used in some 95% of primary grades. The same survey also reveals that in a small country like Ethiopia, 'simple identical texts are used for all the children in a class' (Mulugeta and Tesfaya, 1972).
In connection with readability of basic reading materials and individualisation of instruction, Chall (1958) observes that if the democratic idea of the greatest good of the greatest number is to be carried out in reading, the material has to suit the majority and yet provide for the deviants. The condition is so because of the complexity of the public problem of providing 'mass education' with 'equality of opportunity in education' in a modern democratic society (Fries, 1963). Any modern democratic government has to take considerable interest in the literacy aspect of the mother tongue. Most of the burden of expectations in the mother tongue programme, as Regan (1972) points out, rests on the literacy programme. Such interest of modern democratic governments in literacy programme has of course its origin in the recognition of political and economic values of the modern society. Even the most technologically developed societies have constant need for reading and writing which come under the important literacy aspect of the mother tongue.

There is, however, evidence of a global feeling about matching instructional materials to the average children's ability of a particular level in general and also about incorporating relevant dimensions in the beginning reading materials in one fashion or the other.
There is also a global tendency to quantify the degrees of knowledge and/or skill that a group of children is expected to encompass at any particular time. The argument behind such a tendency is 'subjects are infinitely divisible and capable of being imparted day by day and truth by truth'. Moreover, Skinner's view that 'one learns most efficiently and most exactly by small increments, reinforced by repetition, each successive step a reward in itself' is still practised in language instruction (Applebee, 1972). Mackey (1978) puts this idea in other words. He states that in order to prevent the child from 'Retroactive Inhibition' ('new material is confused with old material in such a way that neither can be remembered') the principle that each new item should confirm what has been taught and should prepare for what is to come should be followed in teaching language in the beginning stages of learning. He thus recommends graded materials for the purpose. 'A reading scheme is a graded series of children's books written on a controlled vocabulary', observes Murray (1968). In such graded series there is a gradual introduction of words with a high rate repetition. The words are also carried over from book to book throughout the reading scheme. (This was the achievement of M. West in his readers in which he pointed out in each lesson the number of words already learnt and the number going to be learnt).
Some of the estimators/critics of Piaget's theory also recommend that an analysis of the structure of the materials to be taught would be an important contributory step towards the most difficult goal of matching the materials to the present cognitive structure of the child. They further recommend that since it is not entirely possible to match materials to 'particular individual', matching materials to a 'specific developmental level' can at least be possible by working out in details the appropriate structure of a subject area. (McNally, 1973).

1.3.3.1 What, When, How of Mother Tongue Teaching:

Considering the teaching of the mother tongue Muller (1972) stated that the concept of mother tongue teaching does not cover anything very explicit. It is only a systematic application on a practical level of each element of language and also 'building a methodological system taking into account successive levels of knowledge' and thus to arrive at a syllabus which would reflect the real capabilities of the child. So, according to Muller, the mother tongue teaching must provide a real reply to the three points of the question: 'What should be taught, when and how?'
Such views presuppose some control or other in the preparation and presentation of instructional materials for different levels of formal learning of the mother tongue. The philosophy of control of instructional materials, especially in language, includes, besides many others, two main considerations. They are: (1) Vocabulary and (2) Language of the language texts (McCullough, 1964).

The vocabulary control starts with the idea that the reader series can advance from the child's spoken vocabulary to a broader vocabulary. This is possible if and when correct answers of the following questions as suggested by McCullough (1964) can be worked out:

- What is the spoken vocabulary of young children?
- How does this spoken vocabulary develop from one level to another?
- What are the vocabulary demands of the curriculum at successive levels?
- What standard vocabulary is the goal of the reader series?
- How often should a word be repeated to be remembered?
- What policies are desirable in regard to choice of words?
Similarly the language control issue poses a main question as to what experience with the language should the child have through the medium of the readers. In order to find out the answer to this question many more questions relating to 'distinction in vocabulary', 'proportion and distinctions in using different parts of speech', 'sentence structure', 'sound and sound sequences', 'punctuation marks' are to be answered rightly thereby to facilitate proper language control in the language texts of the primary grades.

1.3.3.2. How to fix up a language target:

In trying to fix a language target for books in primary series McCullough (1964) has pointed out two problems involved in it. The first is to determine the already established language patterns and words in the children upon which the starting point of new learnings can be fixed, that is to say, to determine the 'lower limit' of vocabulary and language pattern. The second is to estimate an 'upper limit' also. That is, 'a target in vocabulary which may be aimed at and if possible achieved by the books at successive levels of the series'.

In order to estimate an 'upper limit' of vocabulary and thus to build up a controlled vocabulary in primary reader series, one has also to take recourse to 'Numbers Game', that is fixing a proportion of introduction of new words per hundred running words in a given reader. It has been found through some American studies that the presence of one new word per hundred running words in a reader makes it easy to read with fluency, good comprehension, and ease in learning new skills.

In contrast to this the Reading Project Team in India who worked on Hindi medium readers, found that there existed no control of either vocabulary or of language patterns in these readers. The team observed (McCullough, 1964):

Each class has a little book, and in each little book are many words and sentences, embracing a very large vocabulary. The prevalent method is to have the children sound out words and to imitate the teacher's oral rendition of sentences and paragraphs, often to the point of memorization. Oral rendition is considered proof of the learning. (p.73)

Such practice is perhaps more or less apparent in the primary reader series in most Indian languages meant for class room use. This is because of the fact that no systematically established basic words list as well as graded structure list has so far been prepared in Indian languages. There has been practically no attempt in this
respect particularly in the Oriya language. In contrast to this, in English language about 3000 words have been identified as basic words which are used over and over again regardless of the subject. These words are estimated to have comprised about 95% of the running words in English reading materials. It is claimed that if this basic vocabulary is taught to the children, the chances are that anything they read will buttress the unknown word with about nineteen words that they do know and that they can safely read such material. A similar observation was also made by Burroughs (1957). He said that the teacher's own choice of words and the words which writers use in their first readers should all advisably be linked with known words if progress was not to be impeded by unsuspected difficulties. It is also claimed by Murray (1968) that children can learn to read more easily and quickly if the first words they learn are the most used words of the language. In the United States, it is said, attempts have been made to equip the English reading children with this basic vocabulary through reader series upto the sixth grade because it is believed that ease in the beginning is imperative for building necessary skills in meaningful reading, that it establishes confidence in oral reading.
1.3.3.3. Inevitability of Controlled Vocabulary:

Although there is high rationale behind controlled vocabulary in primary reader series, both of phonetic as well as unphonetic languages, the attack on controlled vocabulary philosophy is no less intensive. Artificial, insipid, boring are some of the epithets given to the reader series prepared according to this philosophy. There are still certain unanswered questions on controlled vocabulary which prevent practical demonstration of the philosophy. Still McCullough (1964), after discussing the philosophy and its practical implication threadbare concludes, 'control, in itself, does not necessitate artificiality, insipidity, or boredom'. On the other hand, according to him, 'controlled vocabulary' is the child's 'incubator'. The following statement of McCullough (1964) seems to be the final words on the philosophy of controlled vocabulary:

For many children, the alternative to controlled vocabulary is inefficient learning, time wasted. For some children the alternative is failure. Controlled vocabulary is not a synonym for artificiality, insipidity and boredom. It is a synonym for hardwork on the part of authors, intelligent cooperation on the part of teachers, and better learning on the part of the child. (p.79)

To have a viable controlled vocabulary for preparation of textbook in the mother tongue for primary grades,
McCullough (1964) has shown as many as twenty-one ways. The first of them suggests the determination of the common vocabulary within the larger vocabulary of the current textbooks which the child is required to read in different classes for which the readers have been designed. This means that the objective is to find out the words common to the different subjects and also to find out the words which are apparently the most useful ones.

Summary

Language being the major medium of learning, language education of children has a central importance in education, especially in school. It is the mother tongue/native language/first language only which can enjoy such an importance. The children who are initiated to formal learning of the mother tongue bring with them an informal capital of language which is not 'standard' so as to meet the functional demand of the present day world. The school's vital responsibility is to develop the children's language to that extent. For this carefully selected language material to match the developmental need of children is a bare need for which no systematic programme has yet been launched in this country.
Although the human child is a 'born speaker', his social environment constitutes the *raison d'être* of his language proper. The child begins his language with comprehension and lastly produces it through a gradual process of learning. His amassing of vocabulary begins mostly with nouns and with a few *verbs* and gradually he acquires the other parts of speech of his language. It is roughly estimated that a child before entering into formal learning is in possession of about 2000 active vocabulary even though he may not be in a position to use or understand them in all situations.

Providing an effective language instruction at the beginning stage of formal learning, that is at the primary stage, is a great problem. The problem is that of creating suitable learning materials mainly known as reading materials (basic textbooks) of the beginners of the formal learning. Though theories of developmental psychology advocate matching learning materials to the individual child for carrying out the democratic ideal of 'greatest good of the greatest number', the goal of providing mass education compels planners and administrators to prepare common learning materials for a class or grade which can cater to the need of average children. So
common textbook is a must which must also contain successive levels of linguistic knowledge with sound vocabulary control. Besides many other things, control in early reading materials mainly means 'vocabulary control' and 'language control' of the textbooks. Such control means hardwork for the authors/writers of the textbooks, intelligent cooperation on the part of the teachers and better learning on the part of the children.