CHAPTER – I

Introduction and Conceptual Framework
CHAPTER – I
INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. INTRODUCTION

English teaching in India is the world’s latest democratic enterprise of its kind. Language is one of the unique possessions of a man. It is a door through which a child contemplates the past, grasps the present and approaches the future. In fact, it is language which makes a man good or bad. It distinguishes man from an animal. By using language, a person can win the heart of others. With the same language, he can lose his dignity and degrade himself in the society. Language helps a person in the development of one’s personality. *Language is the flesh and blood of our culture and no language is better than another, declares Sachdeva, M.S (1974, P. 33). Every language helps in the preservation of culture and civilisation of the people who speak the language and incorporate it into a system, which every individual has to learn (Fiayaz Ahmed, 1994, P. 6).* It functions through sounds, words and structures just like human body functions, through different organs such as heart, lungs, brain etc. Moreover, though every language is good in its own place, the importance of English language in any place can never be underestimated.

1.2. IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE

C. Paul Verghese (1989) has rightly pointed out that *of all the languages in the world today English deserves to be regarded as a world language (P. 1). English, though an adopted language in India, has become the part and parcel of the intellectual as well as the emotional make up of the educated people. English has undoubtedly, a highly developed literature and in the quantity of thought and in the quality of style, English language is unrivalled. English is rightly considered as the window to the world knowledge and the gateway to thought and culture.* *At its best, English is a beautiful language. It is a flexible and an easy vehicle for the transmission of thought, whether the simplest and plainest or the highest and most profound colourful when colour is demanded, and it is capable of becoming almost bare at the height of passion (R.L. Mehta, 1967, P. 13).* Its study has excellent disciplinary value so as to produce balanced and liberal minds. Therefore, English language is unique in itself and has a
special place. In the case of Indians, it has established historical associations and has made an impact on their cultural life. It is learnt as a second language and not as a foreign language in India. However, learning English in Indian context has been considered as one of the major issues since independence.

1.3. PLACE OF ENGLISH IN INDIA

The study of English started in our country long ago. English dominated the curriculum of studies during the English regime. But after the departure of the English from India, its position underwent a tremendous change. Hence, one can notice a significant difference in the position of English in India between the pre-independence and post-independent periods. Teaching and learning English in India in the present time differs in a greater extent than that of it in the past.

Position of English in the Past and at the Present

English enjoyed the top most position in India in the past. It was the lingua franca of the elite. It was considered to be the queen of the languages. English was used as the medium of instruction not only in the college level but also in the school level. The teaching-learning process of English was carried out with utmost love and dedication on those days. The elder citizens of the nation were privileged to be taught by the native speakers of English. Everybody was proud of learning English. The English teachers thought of themselves very great and considered teaching English as a privilege provided to them. English was the official language. All the official communications were in English. The knowledge of English was considered as a passport for job opportunities. Persons having a good deal of command over the English language had the chance of getting employment in great many prestigious departments easily. On those days the adoption of English as the official language of India, helped to revivify the regional languages (C. Paul Verghese, 1989, P. 3). Thus English occupied a privileged place in India during the pre-independence period. After independence there was a rethinking on the place of English.

In 1947, the English left India for good. The whole administration and the language policies etc., came into the hands of Indian authorities. The very question regarding the place of English in India became controversial with the passage of time and
there have come out many changes in the teaching and learning of English. Day in and day out, one may find that English is losing its importance in every sphere of life. As Gordon, D.S. (1960) has rightly pointed out the place of English in Indian life and education has changed in many ways (P. 2).

1.4. DETERIORATING STANDARD OF ENGLISH

What must cause concern however is the rapid decline in the standard of English Language Teaching (ELT) in educational institutions in the country with both the teachers and the taught not being in position to use it effectively is the lamenting cry of the educationists today (The Hindu, January 18, 1996, P. 6). Now-a-days, English is taught in India under conditions which are far from satisfactory. It is painful to witness an average graduate, cannot write correctly a few sentences of English after studying it for over ten years (R.L. Mehta, 1967, P. 16). Students of English in the elementary level are unaware of the alphabets. Most of the active vocabularies are misspelt and the pronunciation is awful at the secondary level. The glaring fact that language is a practical ability subject is forgotten. Instead of relishing English, the students push the language to a secondary place in all their educational effort. Grammar conscience is dead and decayed. Various education commissions and committees have been quite elaborately setting targets in the art of English teaching on one hand and on the other, thinkers, educationists and pedagogical experts have been experimenting with new approaches, methods, materials and technical aids for teaching and learning English in consonance with the national goals. But, in spite of all these, the standard of English language teaching and learning has been deteriorating day by day. Its pomp and glory is seen no more. Only substandard, lifeless and even faulty English is prevailing in India today.

Causes for the Deterioration of English Standard in India

The causes for the deterioration in the standard of English are manifold. Great a number of psychological, sociological and political changes have caused an unpredictable downfall in the standard of English in India today. The contributory causes for the substandard English in our educational system are the infrastructure in our school curriculum and the incompetency of the teachers. Any language, especially English must be taught in a desirable environment so as to achieve the expected goals. A
mere ability to use the linguistic forms correctly will not do as for as English teaching is concerned, but one should be able to use them appropriately. Language study is essentially a habit forming process. A language is not a subject which can be taught. It is a subject which must be learnt or caught. In this sense, acquisition of a language is a complex behaviour, and it is not an easy task, either to teach or learn a foreign language.

1.5. NEED OF THE HOUR

Therefore, it may be inferred from these that the fall of standard in English teaching and learning may be attributed to wrong approaches and methods adopted for teaching English. Though the pre-service teacher education programmes prepare the teachers to some extent at least with the awareness of suitable strategies and techniques for teaching English in a successful manner, in a given situation, once they are placed in an environment not congenial for teaching English, they lose all interest in teaching English as a skill subject and start preparing them to get a pass in the examination. Balasubramanian (1985) has rightly pointed out that the present day teacher’s target is mainly to prepare his students for the examination and not to make them competent in the use of the language they are learning (P. 56). Likewise, in the case of the students, the learning of English does not give them any surrender value, so as to use it outside the classroom and derive some benefit out of it. Lack of external encouragement to master English and intrinsic motivation to build up the competence on their own, force the individual to resort to unfair means of scoring pass mark in the examination. That is why, it may be concluded that the standard of English seems to be going down day by day mainly because of the factors associated with both the teacher and the taught.

1.6. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Li, Ming-Sheng (1999) conducted a study on "Perceptions of the Place of Expatriate English Language Teachers in China" inquiring into the cross cultural perceptions of the place of English speaking teachers teaching English to English language majors in Chinese Tertiary Institutions. It was conducted in 1997 in 9 Chinese Tertiary Institutions in a southwestern province of the People’s Republic of China. Four groups of people participated in the survey; expatriate English language teachers, and Chinese university students, teachers and administrators. The goal of the study was to identify the potentials sources of the problems encountered by expatriate English
language teachers in China in the process of the introduction of Western Teaching Pedagogies and to explore possible solutions to these problems. Results indicated that conflict arose from the significant perceptual differences between Chinese students and expatriate teachers in some fundamental conceptions about language learning and teaching. It appeared that teaching and learning were so socio-culturally-conditioned and teaching methodologies were also so context-specific that the transfer of the pedagogical expertise from one culture to another without regard to the local cultural values, expectations, history and educational philosophy led to learner and teacher-learner conflicts. This study proposes making use of ‘Border Pedagogy’ to transcend these culture-induced differences and to manage the conflicts for their positive effects. This approach embraces a positive attitude towards differences by creating cultural synergy in which differing views are respected and accommodated, mutual trust and confidence built, common agendas shared cultural borders crossed and problems resolved. To achieve such a goal, it was stated that a positive perception of cultural awareness, collaboration, reflection, inquiry and multi-dimensional involvement are of critical importance to maximize the imported foreign expertise in English language teaching in China.

Similarly, several studies have shown that apart from the visible social or linguistic factors associated with the downfall of standard in teaching and learning English the psychological factors such as motivation, attitude, and perception also play a significant role. There are so many Indian studies revealing the association between language learning and psychological aspects like interest, motivation, attitude towards English etc. However, on going through the psycholinguistic studies aiming at identifying the base for all the psychological variables, which are influential enough to alter the teaching learning process of a second or foreign language, it is found that perception is the base for all these characteristics. The way the people perceive a task or an act is found to determine the success in performing the particular task or act. Therefore, perception depends on one’s exposure and experience which may be conducive or non-conducive or forming a liking or inclination towards what may be interacted upon by the concerned individual. Hence, perception may be positive or negative; or accurate or inaccurate; or right or wrong pertaining to the individual and the environment.
1.6.1. Perception of English Language Teaching

Smith, Brien, N. and Necessary, James, R. (1994) asserted, through their study on 'student and faculty perception of teaching behaviour and student academic success' that teaching behaviours are related to students' academic achievement. Therefore, the role of teachers seems to be a vital factor in uplifting the standard of education especially standard of English. According to Parter Greg (1995), students feel that the most important teacher qualities were respect, kindness, positive attitude, patience and a sense of humour. An overwhelming number of students feel that teachers needed to be more sensitive. From the research study of Sabatella, Joseph, Paul (1992) on the topic, "using teacher perceptions as a fulcrum for school improvement", it is understood that if teachers could become more accurate perceivers of their schools' reality, then that accurate perception would, by itself, compel action to improve students achievement.

Generally, the more closely attending to some object or event in the environment, is the more can perceive and learn about it (Philip G. Zimbardo, 1999, P. 153). The above studies clearly show that role of the teachers and their competencies are important factors in determining the standard of language learning and teaching. Therefore, it is a crucial need to study in depth the nature of perception of the masters teaching English about their career. Only a series of studies on perception, relating English language learning and teaching will pave way for maintaining and enriching the standard to learning and teaching English.

1.6.2. Perception: Its Meaning

Perception refers to the way the world looks, sounds, feels, tastes or smells. In other words perception can be defined as whatever is experienced by a person (Clifford T. Morgan, 1986, P. 107). Human beings live in a world of stimuli. Stimuli activate receptors, which in turn send messages to the brain, which eventually uses this information to guide behaviour. While interacting with environment, the organism is impinged by a number of stimuli. Stimuli are received by sensation. Sensation is a raw material of experience. When meaning is added to the sensation, by the help of past experience and learning it becomes perception. For instance, seeing a bird like object flying in the sky is a sensation. When it is clearly observed and attended to and saying it
an aeroplane is perception. Perception has become the meeting ground of experimental, clinical and social psychology. It is an integrated complex process involving sensation, attention and meaning.  

 Perception is an individual's awareness, aspect of behaviour for it is the way of each person processes the raw data he or she receives from the environment into meaningful patterns (S.K. Mangal, 2001, P. 123). Perceptions are closely linked to patterns of activity in the sensory channels themselves. The sensory-input patterns provide only the raw material for experience. For example, when the visual riches of an art museum, people's faces, television, or a conversation, and individual perceives active processes work on the sensory input to transform it into what we actually experience. Thus perception – one's experience of the world – arises from sensory input plus the way the people process the sensory information.

1.6.3. Determinants of Perception

Every individual do not perceive the world as it is but as they are. People perceive things in a particular manner, because they have learnt to perceive it in that way instead of perceiving the stimulus as it is. The basic notion is that every individual while perceiving remains in a more or less private world of his own and that each individual perceives a given reality in a characteristic way and from this angle there are as many realities as there are perceivers.

1.6.3.1. Past Experience

Perception is defined as the interpretation of sensation in the light of past experience. It is otherwise known as the habit factor. A child on seeing a four-legged animal giving milk perceives it as a cow. This is based on his past learning. Perceptual process mostly depends upon the past experiences and images of the perceiver. Certain characteristics may not be sensed in the stimulus at the first instance. One may add to it a number of characteristics from his past experience. Keeping other factors constant, the same stimulus may be perceived differently by different people, because of the differences in their past experience. A child may fondle a cat while another may hate it and perceives it as dangerous. Thus past experience produce various kinds of attitudes, prejudices and beliefs about the percept. The same individual may perceive the same stimulus differently at different times due to past experience. Past experience, therefore, plays a major role in the perceptual process. As a concluding remark, it may be stated
that in familiar environments, prior knowledge provides additional information about objective orientation (Philip G. Zimbardo, 1988, P. 288).

1.6.3.2. Needs, Values and Motives

Perception may not simply be the function of an individuals' organic makeup alone, but be related to his needs, values and motives (Girishbala Mohanty, 2000, P. 122). It is a fact that each one of us perceives the environment around us in terms of his personal needs. There is a fundamental difference in perceiving, particularly the social situations and the objects which are vague. A one rupee coin has a greater value for a poor than for his rich counterpart as he is in greater need of money. When a hunger subject is asked to perceive the word “Good”, he will perceive it as, ‘food’. Thus our perception is influenced by immediate need and motives of the individual. Often our perception depends upon the current motive. Whenever one’s needs differ, one may literally see differently. Much of the process of individual’s perception depends upon past wants, and the needs in terms of situation in which they play an important role in guiding the structure of one’s motor habits.

1.6.3.3. Moods and Emotions

Very often in our day-to-day life the individuals become the prey of moods and emotions. One’s moods and emotions change under changing circumstances. Accordingly, perception is also influenced by mood. In a pleasant mood the food appears to be delicious. But the same food may not be relished in an unhappy state. The sun may be perceived as pale, beneficent, moonlight romantic and the same morning star may have different significance upon one’s mood, mental state and emotional condition. In a threatening situation what perceptions people have are evidently less flexible and more rigid, they tend to be defended and protected against change (William C. Morse, G. Max Wingo, 1968, P. 179).

1.6.3.4. Perceptual Set

Another aspect that influences perception is set. Set is a temporary readiness to perceive or react to a stimulus in a particular way. There are three types of set – motor, mental and perceptual. A motor set is a readiness, to make a quick, and prepared response. A mental set is a readiness to deal with a situation such as a problem-solving
task or a game in a way determined by learned rules. A perceptual set is a readiness to
detect a particular stimulus in a given context. A new mother is perceptually set to hear
the cries of her child. Perception is greatly determined by the set or attitude that the
person has at the time of perceiving (Girishbala Mohanty, 1986, P. 124). A person who
has very good opinion about somebody will perceive his dealings in the most favourable
manner, though they are just the reverse. When a person is unhappy, moody and angry,
everything appears to him to be worthless, and vice-versa when he is in a jovial mood.
In human life innumerable perceptions are influenced by mental set. Differential
perception takes place due to difference in mental set.

1.6.4. Process of Perception

Perceptual systems do not simply record information about the external world but
actively organise and interpret information as well. Perception is a three-stage process
consisting of a sensory stage, a perceptual organisation stage and an identification or
recognition stage. At the sensory level of processing, physical energy is detected and
transformed into neural energy and sensory experience. At the organisational level,
perceptual processes organise sensations into coherent images and give perception of
objects and patterns. At the level of identification and recognition, percepts of objects
are compared with memory representations to be recognised as familiar and meaningful
objects.

1.6.4.1. Sensory Stage

The term perception is often used to mean the over all process of apprehending
objects and events in the external environment. Sensation refers to the first stage in
which physical energy in the world, such as light and sound waves, is transduced into
neural activity of cortical cells that codes information about the way the receptor organs
are being stimulated (Philip G. Zimbardo, 1988, P. 185). Even at this early point in the
neurological journey there is stimulus selection and transformation going on.

1.6.4.2. Perceptual Organisation Stage

Perception in its narrow usage refers to the next stage in which an interval
representation of an object is formed and an experienced percept of the external stimulus
is developed. Part of what an individual perceive comes through the senses from the
object before us; another part ... always comes ... out of their own head. The out of our own head, part of this quotation refers to the active processing of sensory input that makes own experience of the world what it is (Clifford T. Morgan, 1986, P. 108). The representation provides a working description of the perceiver’s external environment. Information from the lower order detectors is organised and modified by higher order brain processes to convert stimulus features and element into patterns and forms that are recognizable.

1.6.4.3. Identification Stage

Identification and recognition, the third stage in this sequence, assigns meanings to percepts. Circular objects become baseballs, coins, clocks, oranges and moons; people may be identified as male or female, friend or foe, relative or rock star. 20To identify and recognise what something is, what it is called, and how best to respond to it involves higher level cognitive process, which include our theories, memories, values, beliefs and attitudes concerning the object (Philip G. Zimbardo, 1999, P. 142). The above brief introduction about the stages in perception enables us to arrive at a meaningful understanding of the perceptual world around the individuals.

1.6.5. Theories of Perception

It is now acquainted with the major question of perception, how does the perceptual system recover the structure of the environment? Now it needs to know more of a background in the types of theories that have dominated research on perception. The following are some of the important theories profounded by eminent psychologists on perception which are highly enlightening one’s knowledge about perceptual system.

1.6.5.1. Helmholtz’s Classical Theory

21Hermann Von Helmholtz argued for the importance of experience - or nurture - in perception (Quoted by Philip G. Zimbardo, 1999, P. 150). His theory emphasised the role of mental process in interpreting the often-ambiguous stimulus arrays that excite the nervous system. By using prior knowledge of the environment, an observer makes hypotheses, or inferences, about the way things really are. For instance, an individual would be likely to interpret his brief view of a four-legged creature moving through the woods as a dog rather than as a wolf. Perception is thus an inductive process, moving
from specific images to inferences about the general class of objects or events that the images might represent. Since, this process takes place out of one’s conscious awareness, Helmholtz termed it unconscious inference. Ordinarily, these inferential processes work well. However, perceptual illusions can result when unusual circumstances allow multiple interpretations of the same stimulus or favour an old, familiar interpretation when a new one is required.

Helmholtz’s theory broke perception down into two stages. In the first analytic stage, the sense organs analyse the physical world into fundamental sensations. In the second synthetic stage, people integrate and synthesize these sensory elements into perceptions of objects and their properties. Helmholtz’s theory proposes that an individual learns how to interpret sensations on the basis of his experience with the world. Interpretations of people are, in effect, informed guesses about our perceptions.

1.6.5.2. The Gestalt Approach

Gestalt psychology, founded in Germany in the second decade of the twentieth century, put greater emphasis on the role of innate structures - nature - in perceptual experience. The main exponents of Gestalt psychology maintained that psychological phenomena could be understood only when viewed as organised, structured wholes and not when broken down into primitive perceptual elements. Gestalt psychology challenged atomistic views of psychology by arguing that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. For example, when listening to music, the whole melodies even though they are composed of separate notes are perceived. Gestalt psychologists advocate that the holistic perception of the world arises because the context is organised to function that way.

1.6.5.3. Gibson’s Ecological Optics

James Gibson proposed a very influential approach to perception. Instead of trying to understand perception as a result of an organism’s structure, it could be better understood through an analysis of the immediately surrounding environment or its ecology. Thus Gibson’s approach to perception, emphasizes the role of the observer as an active explorer and focused on invariant information reflected from stimulus environment.
1.6.6. Perception: The Basis for Learning

Learning occupies a very important place in one's life. Most of what people do or not do is influenced by what they learn and how they have learnt it. Learning, therefore, provides a key or structure to one's personality and behaviour. **Learning is the acquisition of habits, knowledge and attitudes. It involves new way of doing thing, and it operates on an individual's attempts to overcome obstacles or to adjust to new situations. It represents progressive changes in behaviour . . . It enables him to satisfy interests to attain a goal** (Crow and Crow, 1973, P. 225). Perception forms the foundation for learning. Once it is seen, it is known. But when a thing evidently perceived it is learnt. **In many situations, to perceive is to learn** (William C. Morse and Max Wingo, G., 1968, P. 176). The matter of seeing is very descriptive. When it is an uncomplicated situation such as seeing the colour of the deposit left on a glass plate by smoke or seeing that water can turn the mill wheel, very little need be added to the sensory data. However, to see from a diagram how an internal combustion engine works is quite another matter. Simple exposure to stimuli is not enough. The perceiver pay, attention to, remembers, utilizes a greater degree of previous experience and later recognizes. Thus, he learns finally how the engine works. Therefore, what is not perceived will not be learned.

1.6.7. The Theory of Conditioning and Perception

The theory of conditioning as advocated by Pavlov, considers learning as a habit formation and is based on the principle of association and substitution (S.K. Mangal, 2001, P. 130). It is simply a stimulus response type learning wherein place of a natural stimulus food, water, sexual contact, etc., the artificial stimulus like the sound of the bell, sight of light of a definite colour, etc., can evoke a natural response. There is a perfect association between the types of stimuli presented together. As a result, after sometime natural stimulus can be substituted or replaced by an artificial stimulus is able to evoke the natural response. It is a learning process whereby an artificial or conditioned stimulus is able to behave like a natural stimulus when both natural and artificial stimuli are presented together. **Conditioning is a fruitful technique which allows us to learn through sensory motor organs even when language is difficult** (Girishbala Mohanty, 2000, P. 169). Perception is the basis for the conditioning process.
of learning also. Without proper perception, the conditioning process of learning cannot continue further. William Clark Trow (1970) has rightly pointed out that when the learner can perceive and register the significant stimulus, the conditioning process can proceed (P. 270). Therefore, if there is no perception, there is no learning through conditioning process.

1.6.8. Perception and Acquisition of Language Skills

Language is not a knowledge subject. It is a skill subject. It is a skill, an art, a feeling and a doing (D.S. Gordon, 1960, P. 1). If language teaching is a matter of imparting a skill then it goes without saying that the teacher of a language must himself possess these skills in abundant measure. Listening, speaking, reading and writing are the major skills expected to be developed by the learners. Learning words and their meaning, spelling, phonology and grammar are some of the minor skills which form the basis for developing the major skills. Almost, all the language skills are learnt either by conditioning or by repetition and recognition which are only the outcome of perception. Therefore, it is not far from truth that acquisition of language skills is possible only by proper perception.

1.6.8.1. Speech Perception and Production

Learning to talk is a tremendously significant achievement. Two streams of language development, vocalization and communication develop side by side in early speech production. The capability of humans to distinguish and create speech sounds is the basis for all languages. The perception and creation of speech can be divided into the major periods: the prelinguistic period, which lasts until around the child's first birthday, and the linguistic period, which continues from that point on (David Moshman, 1987, P. 330). In the prelinguistic period, speech does not yet convey meaning. Infants vocalize a great deal but their main language activity is articulating and practising sounds. Later, in the linguistic period, these skills are applied as meaning becomes linked to speech sounds and speech production.

Speech Perception at Prelinguistic Period

Prelinguistic period is an important stage, because it is only at this stage proper foundation is laid for the development of speaking skill. At this stage, three levels of
vocalisation are noticed. Crying is the most obvious form of infant vocalization. Crying begins at birth. Babies cry when they are cold, hungry, uncomfortable or want to be held. This is the first stage in the production of sound. At about three months, another form of biologically based vocalization, cooing develops. Cooing is somewhat closer to speech than crying, it is richer and contains both consonant and vowel sounds. Cooing usually indicates a pleasurable state. During the next stage of vocalization, babbling, infants continue to diversify the sounds made earlier in crying and cooing. Early at this stage, there is little effect of the particular language used in the home. Thus even very young infants can perceive differences in speech sounds. Almost from the beginning, infants also can be soothed by gentle speech and show a preference for their mother's voices. They increase their rate of vocalization when they are spoken to. According to David Moshman and John A. Glover (1987), 29The ability to perceive speech sounds, however, and the fact that adults begin talking to infants almost from the moment of birth, lay the groundwork for linguistic communication with even very young children (P. 381). Thus, perception acts as the foundation for the development of speaking skill at the prelinguistic period.

**Development of Speaking Skill at the Linguistic Period**

The linguistic period begins with a shift from non-meaningful vocalization to meaningful speech. Of course, this shift is not sudden. The children learn gradually. At this stage, the babbling babies produce a tremendous range of sounds unrestricted by meaning. Faced with the need to communicate meaningfully children now to use a few sounds in an organized and systematic way. Children's speech becomes more and more elaborate. Children soon move from single word utterances to the syntactic stage, in which they begin to produce sentences. Thus at this period, children acquire the ability to speak meaningfully. 30The process of acquiring meaning, like that of motor skills, is a double one: of perception and conditioning. Children learn the meaning of words through direct experiences with what the word stand for, their referents, or indirectly through experience with the terms in which they are defined. Such experience must enable the learner to perceive and register certain objects and events and their characteristics rather than others, and attach the appropriate nametag (William Clark Trow, 1970, P. 304). Language has many mechanisms for linking meaning. These mechanisms, called cohesive devices, links the language together. Cohesive devices
generally enhance the ability of the language to convey meaning. They help link utterances or even written sentences together into a meaningful whole. This type of adult way of cohesive utterances or speaking is possible only by perception and registering. William Clark Trow (1970) has rightly pointed out that word meaning are acquired by registering, perceiving or identifying a pattern of stimuli or relationships and by repeatedly rewarding experiences in connecting the word with the pattern. Therefore, perception forms the basis for the primary level of speaking as well as the meaningful, and cohesive adult way of speaking.

1.6.8.2. Perceptual Processes and Development of Reading Skill

According to Philip G. Zimbardo (1999) "identification and recognition attach meaning to the percepts (P. 177). Recognition is the third stage in the process of perception. Reading is an important passive language skill. Children learn to read at their early stages and they read to learn when they grow up. The ability to read the words on the page depends on the ability to recognize (Robert A. Baron, 1992, P. 124). Reading occurs either by template-matching or by prototype-matching, people have many templates or specific patterns, stored in our memories for various visual stimuli that one encounters. If a visual stimulus, say a letter, matches one of the templates, one recognizes it. If it does not, one has to search for another that does match. A related but more viable explanation, referred to as prototype-matching, theory, suggests that one may automatically compare each letter and perhaps words to abstract representations of these stimuli in his memories known as prototypes. According to this view, every individual has a prototype in memory for each letter of the alphabet, based on all examples of the letter previously encountered. Thus, recognition is dependent on finding a correct match between the stimulus letter or word and a previously seen prototype.

1.6.8.3. Spelling Ability - An Outcome of Perception

Many good spelling books combine phonetic, visual and kinetic methods to teach pupils how to spell. In spite of many phonetic irregularities in one's English language, the language does have many structural regularities. If pupil masters the regularities in a language, irregular spelling can be made to stand out. Learning correct spelling is also a process of conditioning. As in other conditioning, the teacher cannot expect correct performance after only one or two demonstrations. Here too, repetition and reward are
necessary. The practice of teaching lists of words to spell, whether the pupil knows what they mean or not, has gradually given way to a more realistic practice of teaching the pupil to discover and make use of phonetic principles in spelling the words he wishes to use and concentrate his attention on any phonetic irregularities in those words. According to William Clark Trow (1970) the maturation principle of readiness can therefore, be invoked, and attention can be given by individual pupils to the spelling of the words that cause difficulty. Gradually the pupil himself learns to perceive that he has spelled a word incorrectly, just as he learns to perceive that a note is wrongly sung or played, and he can then practice the necessary corrections (P. 301). Thus, perception helps the children correct their wrong spelling and acquire better spelling ability.

1.6.8.4. Perception and Mechanics of Writing

Handwriting is a lost art today. It has fallen on evil days. As a matter of fact, handwriting is one of the major skills developed at the school level. The influence of context and expectations on perception is a crucial subject of study. Perceptual identification depends on one's expectations and on the physical properties of the object we see. Depending on what we already know, where we are, and what else we see around us, our identification may vary. Only in this line we identify and differentiate one letter from the other. For example, when we look at the following words,

\[
\text{TAE CAT}
\]

we simple say, The Cat. That is correct. Physically, these two letters are exactly the same, yet we perceived the first as an H and the second as an A (Philip G. Zimbardo, 1999, P. 181). Therefore, it is one's perception that makes the aware of the mechanics of writing and identifies the alphabet appropriately.

1.6.9. Perception Promotes Teacher Efficacy

Teaching is a dynamic process. Teaching is a personalised process in which the personality of the teacher plays a key role. Teachers make teaching. And teachers are persons first of all, getting the results they get chiefly because they are personalities (Lawrence D. Haskew, 1956, P. 4). The teacher, like the learner, is a distinctive person, a complex organism with a variety of needs, wants and abilities. He also has anxieties,
concerns, knowledge, perceptions, intelligence, personal problems, motivation, skills and the like. Hence, the essence of teaching lies in the hands of a teacher. His responsibilities and role to play in the process of teaching is manifold. Teachers are the man makers. They make the leaders of the future day. Teachers shape and mould the character of the human folk. Teachers are rightly conceived as the nation builders. Of all the factors in school system the teachers occupy the key position. Human contacts are the essence of school life. That is why the personality of the teacher is regarded as a potent factor in education. Therefore, a teacher must be a versatile genius. He should be efficient in all walks of life. It is his positive perception about his career that makes him a creative, impressive and a challenging teacher.

1.6.9.1. Perception makes a Teacher Creative

For a teacher, it is a challenge to do the teaching effectively so that the young learners can be profitably and strongly drawn in, in the venture of learning. It calls for the creativity of the teacher. The teacher must foresee things and foretell the advancement. He should be an updated personality. His thinking needs to be creative and his teaching venture also should be creative. According to Philip G. Zimbardo (1988), "because of our ability to go beyond the sensory gifts that evolution has bestowed on our species, we can become more creative in the way we perceive the world" (P. 217). Perceptual creativity involves experiencing the world in ways that are imaginative and personality enriching. It is the way in which the teacher perceives his teaching process that makes him a creative teacher.

1.6.9.2. Perception and Active Selection of Best Teaching Method

Language acquisition is a stunning human capability. Learning can be reinforced with learning aids and adopting different variety of teaching methods because they stimulate, motivate as well as arrest learners attention for a while during the instructional process. Over the years there have been different methods employed for the teaching of a language. Whether this method or that method should be used in teaching a language has become a very prominent question these days. Choosing the appropriate method has become a problem in this scientific age when everybody is after scientific approach to achievement. According to D.A. Wilkins (1972), a glance at the history of language teaching reveals enormous diversity of methodology over the years (C.J. Brumfit, 1979,
P. 82). This is mainly due to lack of proper perception. As Ernest R. Higard (1980) has pointed out our perceptions are selective. We do not react equally to all the stimuli impinging us instead we focus on a few. If we perceive the methods and approaches accurately, then we will select the suitable method easily. Perception involves an active search for the best interpretation. Therefore selection of suitable teaching method is concerned mainly with the perception of the teachers (P. 147).

1.6.9.3. Adapting to the Complexity

Learning is a complex process. Learning and teaching is the concern of the trained teacher. A teacher must have the ability to adapt to the complexity of the world. In recent years language teaching overseas has taken on a new character. Previously it was usual to talk about the aims of English learning in terms of the so-called language skills of speaking, reading and writing. Recently, however, a need has arisen to specify the aims of English learning more precisely as the language has increasingly be required to take on an auxiliary role at the tertiary level of education. English teaching has been called upon to provide students with the basic ability to use the language, to receive and to convey information with their specialist studies. According to Allen, J.P.B. and Widdowson, H.G. (1974), there is a need for a new approach to language teaching (Quoted by C.J. Brumfit and K. Johnson, 1979, P. 122). To cope up with this complexity the teacher need to adapt accordingly. Perception, like any other powerful process, can be a helping aid in this regard. Perception helps us adapt to a complex and ever changing environment (Robert A. Baron, 1992, P. 121).

1.6.9.4. Perception Promotes Confidence

English requires a new orientation to its teaching. Nowadays the nation needs the service of millions of teachers who have trained minds and not stuffed brains. In a world filled with variability and change, a teacher must meet the challenges confidently. A teacher must be very clear about the teaching materials, teaching methods, current principles and techniques. He must be aware of the ever-changing environment. According to Philip G. Zimbardo (1999) the most fundamental properties of normal human perception is the tendency to transform ambiguity and uncertainty about the environment into a clear interpretation that you can act upon with confidence (P. 147). A teacher must therefore eliminate ambiguity and uncertainty about his teaching career.
and acquire a clear interpretation about it. A perceiver is constantly rearranging the stimuli, so that they fit better and are more coherent. Incongruity and massy perceptions are rejected in favour of those with clear, clean, consistencies. Therefore, a good teacher needs proper perception about his career so as to do his full justice to his profession with confidence, weeding out the ambiguity and uncertainty about it.

1.6.10. Student Teachers’ Perception Ascertains Effective Teaching and Learning

There is no doubt that of the factors, which determine the quality of education and its contribution to national development, teacher education is among the most important ones. It is on the qualities and character, educational qualifications and professional competence of the teachers that success of all educational endeavours depends. Thus quality professional training of teachers is of crucial significance (IGNOU, Journal Article, January 2000). Therefore, as a citizen of India every student teacher should visualise his country great. They should have faith on themselves and their profession. According to R.P. Singh (1995) teacher education is a key in quality education (An Agenda for 21st Century, 1995, P. 191). Innumerable investigations have been carried out regarding the quality improvement of student teachers. Almost all the studies declare that the perception of student teachers has its own invaluable contribution towards the improvement of students' achievement. Sabatella, Joseph, Paul (1992) has pointed out that if teachers could become more accurate perceivers of their schools’ reality then that accurate perception would, by itself, compel action to improve student achievement. Therefore, a close and deep study on the perception of student teachers is found to be essential. Powell, Kathryn, Weaver (1993) asserted that would be teachers were more confident in their abilities to become effective teachers. But according to Lang, Catherine (1994) beginning teachers found it hard to articulate their planning process. The results of Latz-Mark’s (1992) study reveal that pre-service teachers do not have a clear understanding of the classroom management. Therefore, the student teachers feel that models provided by their tutor teachers had been helpful (Lang, Catherine, 1994). Unfortunately for a variety of reasons, some teachers did not implement instructional techniques (Izen, Cornelia, Lively and Brown Field, 1991). Gemell Crosby, Susan et al., (1944) through their study on preschool teachers' perceptions have clearly stated that self-perception of competency were related to positive attitudes. Perception provides accurate information (Philip G. Zimbardo and
Richard J. Gerrig, 1999, P. 153). Therefore, to conclude, it is the perception of the student teachers that makes the teaching and learning effective or ineffective.

1.7. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Over the years, the teachers of language have adopted, adapted, invented and developed a bewildering variety of approaches and methods to teach English. But, the approaches and methods practised during the training period are not used by many when they become regular teachers. Moreover, most of the teachers are not aware of the current techniques and trends in education.

Since, this is the prevailing conditions in most of the schools, the investigator is prompted to think that some of mental, emotional, psychological and social characteristics deciding the efficiency of teachers teaching English may be lacking in teachers teaching English. The theoretical discussions developed by the investigator on 'perception' and its role in influencing teacher behaviour, make one to believe that the present day teachers of English were not provided with experiences and exposures during their training period suitable enough to develop a positive or accurate perception of teaching or learning English. Therefore, the investigator, in order to verify the goodness of teachers coming out of Teacher Training Institutes and Colleges of Education to teach English in schools, has chosen 'perception' as the area of investigation. Moreover, considering the crucial nature of teacher preparation, the investigator planned to study the perception of teaching and learning English with regard to the teacher trainees. Hence, the investigator would like to state the topic of his research as "A STUDY OF PERCEPTION OF ENGLISH TEACHING AND LEARNING BY GRADUATE AND NON-GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHERS".
1.8. REFERENCES


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher/Editor</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Girishbala Mohanty</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>A Textbook of General Psychology</td>
<td>Kalyani Publishers, Ludhiana</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td></td>
<td>P. 150.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Gordon, D.S.</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>The Teaching of English in Free India</td>
<td>The Christian Literary Society, Madras</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Ibid</td>
<td></td>
<td>P. 381.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Robert A. Baron</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Psychology, Third Edition</td>
<td>Allyn and Bacon, Boston</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35. Lawrence, D. Haskew Scott (1956) This is Teaching, Foresman and Company, P. 4.


