Chapter I

Introduction

1.1.0 Realistic Significance of English Learning as a Second Language in Indian Schools

English has now acquired the status of a global language. Kachru (1992) reported that India has the largest number of users of English. India has the historical advantage also of inheriting the language. English came to India as the language of colonizers. The language has spread horizontally across the country over the time. At the same time, it has percolated vertically into various strata of Indian society. English enjoyed the royal prestige when India was ruled by the British. Raja Rammohon Roy, M. K. Gandhi and others stressed on the use of English because it makes an easy access to western thought and culture. It has brought the message of political democracy, sense of national unity, and a new consciousness of human dignity. It has brought us in the orbit of modern civilization, practical life and standard living. No aspect of life is effectively prospering without the linguistic touch of this foreign language. Even the struggle for independence started in English. During the period of struggle for independence and some years after independence, English had to suffer a setback. Then again, an upsurging trend started arising in the Indian horizon; and once again, English started gaining the love of Indians. The people re-contemplated over the position of English and about its importance in the educational matters. Naturally, after getting the much cherished freedom, the objective of the nation was accomplished and again the history started to repeat. Now, it has been unanimously decided by the citizens of this country that it is impossible to rid ourselves of this language. Moreover, the international implications, scientific and technological developments compelled the country to adjust itself to the world trends by continuing to accept this language. In the emerging, progressive and changing India, we accept English as a language not for literacy pursuits, but for communication; not for mastery, but for working knowledge; not for glorification, but as a means for further progress. English is a sine quo non for all-round progress of India. The current status of English stems from its overwhelming presence on the world stage and the reflection of this in the national
arena (Position Paper of NCERT, 2007). English language is ruling the whole world today. It is the language being used by the large majority of the world. No country can thrive and develop without the help of this language in today’s environment. It is a window on the world of science and technology. Legal transactions and administration are carried out through English. English is also a language of media, international tourism, international diplomacy and call-centers. Within India, it serves as a link language between speakers of one language (for example, Kannada) and those of another (for example, Bengali, Punjabi etc.). It also acts as a link language between people of one nation (for example, India) and those of another (for example, Thailand, Brazil etc.). Thus, it is a link language domestically and internationally. International relationship, political necessity, cultural exchanges, social amity, financial urgency, natural calamity and other human considerations compel all countries to use this language. It is the best link language and the language of peace and friendship. It is the Liguia Franca. It is the only medium of progressive ideas, research techniques and expansion of science and technology. This language pervades all the spheres of politics, social studies, religion, science and technology, trade, culture and all other subjects of this earth and of the other world. The visible impact of this presence of English is that today it is being demanded by everyone at the very initial stage of schooling.

1.1.1 Defining the Position of English Learning at Elementary School Curriculum

English occupies an important place in school curriculum. In our country English is taught as second language. And this second language is a compulsory language of study at our school level. Different states in India have introduced English as second language at different levels. For example, English has been taught as a compulsory subject from class-I in states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Meghalaya etc., from class-II in states like Andhra Pradesh, and class-III in West Bengal etc. However, at the national level, English is being taught from class I and English remains the medium of instruction as well. Therefore, English learning enjoys the top priority in our educational system. It is now generally agreed that the students should learn English from the elementary stage (NCF-2005).
1.1.2. What Should Be the Nature of a Second Language Learning Classroom Environment

Classroom environment is a broad term. It does not only consist of walls, tables, chairs, and lack of pollution; rather it comes from how a teacher teaches, what is the teacher’s attitude, how he behaves, how he treats his pupils, what kind of relationship exists between the teacher and taught, what kind of atmosphere is created in the classroom by the teacher etc. So, two types of classroom environment are found. They are physical environment (that consists of type of physical infrastructure, types of seating arrangement, size of the classroom, lighting system, type of furniture etc.) and psychological/human environment. It is human players who play more important role than the physical infrastructure to create a good classroom environment. Classroom environment should be enticing, inviting, arresting, relaxing, friendly, homely, encouraging and healthy one. A happy democratic atmosphere should be developed in class, so that the child is not hindered in his attempts to express constructively the impulses that arouse in him. In countries like India, English is taught as a second language so students do not have the kind of exposure that children in Britain, Australia and America have. It is second to the mother tongue/regional language in India. As a result, exposure of the students to English language is very limited. Therefore, the job of English teacher becomes more difficult. A teacher of second language should create homely atmosphere. First, he has to help his learner to overcome inhibitions, nervousness, and lack of confidence. Then, he has to create proper atmosphere so that learners learn the target language as effortlessly as possible. In this context, it is appropriate to mention Krashen’s (1985) distinction between acquisition and learning. He refers to first language acquisition as the natural and unconscious process of winking the eyes or like breathing. Learning, on the other hand, is an artificial process. The distinction between acquisition and learning has implications for the proper kind of environment in second language classroom. The teacher’s job is to create tension-free, anxiety-free, carefree, and relaxed environment. The teacher should approximate first language acquisition conditions. NFG of NCERT (2007) also reported that proper environment is needed inside as well as outside the school for a child to develop the basic skills of language.
1.2.0 Developing the Four Fold Linguistic Skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing) in English Learning – A Prime Objective of English Learning at Elementary stage

The aim of language learning is very commonly defined in terms of four skills i.e. speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Davies (2000) stated that there is a close interrelationship among all the four language skills. Greene & Petty (1963) remarked that language is a skill subject like arithmetic and other subjects. The skills in language learning form an extremely important body of knowledge that every individual must master in order to meet all types of school and life situation. A teacher who tries to teach a child to read without recognizing the importance of listening and speaking skills and to get success in reading will meet with frustration. So, a teacher should thoughtfully recognize the interrelationships of language skills. The development of language skills follows a chronological pattern and begins in infancy. The child listens and responds to language before he learns to talk. No child learns to talk before he has heard any language. Similarly, a child knows something about the reading process and has some familiarity with printed language before he learns to write. It is to remember that in most formal and informal interactions, while one is speaking, one is also listening and one may also take note of it at the same time. Therefore, it is not possible to segment the skills into LSRW in real life situations. However, for pedagogic reasons, we often list activities with a focus on one skill. Therefore, the four language skills are integrated in nature. Despite these interrelationships among the language arts, competence in one does not ensure success in the others. Each area has its own specific goals and essential skills, and an effective language program must make provision for specific instruction in each area (Monroe, Nichols & Greet, 1960). Therefore, it is very essential to emphasize and develop these skills from the beginning of formal education, which is from kindergarten and should be continued at all stages of education.

1.2.1 Are All the Linguistic Skills Active Skills

Conventional notions stated that speaking and writing are said to be active or productive skills whereas listening and reading are said to be passive or receptive skills (Greene & Petty 1963). We can express these conventional notions in a simple diagram as follows:
However, it dawned upon English language teaching (ELT) experts that listening and reading are as active as speaking and writing. It is now generally agreed that effective listening and reading require as much attention and mental activity as speaking and writing. So, the traditional labeling of reading and listening skills as passive skills is both misleading and incorrect (Davies, 2000). Like the reader, the listener is involved, for instance, in guessing, anticipating, checking, interpreting, interacting and organizing the input. While listening or reading, the readers and the listeners are actively, personally and consciously involved in the activity. So, the common conception that listeners are passive receivers of information and the listening process is practically automatic has been rejected now. Actually, good listeners are ‘active’ and ‘makers of ideas’. They get involved with what they hear, both intellectually and emotionally (Anderson, 1993). Therefore, listening and reading are psychologically active while speaking and writing are physiologically active. Listening is a sort of mute dialogue; reading is a kind of quiet correspondence. When we listen, we take turns silently; when we read, we inscribe interpretations on the invisible paper of consciousness. Besides the division of the skills as ‘receptive' and ‘productive', another subdivision focuses on ‘one-way reception' and ‘interactive reception' in this age of active learning. Reading and writing are one-way skills where learners do not get direct feedback. However, in speaking and listening, learners may have their understanding and reproduction checked instantly. To put it in simple words, listening and reading are receptive skills whereas writing and speaking are productive skills. Both production and reception are active processes. So, on the basis of above discussion it can be stated that all the linguistic skills are active skills.

1.2.2 Listening Skill – A Description

What is Listening Skill?

Listening is the first language mode/skill that children acquire as it provides the basis for the development of other linguistic skills. Some people think that hearing and
listening are the same skill but they are not. Davis (2005) states that hearing is simply the physical act of receiving sound stimulation through the ear and sending it to the brain for reception. On the other hand, listening is a mental process of tuning into a sound, recognizing its importance, and interpreting the information at the brain. Therefore, the ability to detect a sound is hearing and the ability to attach meaning to it is listening. Thus, listening is one of the fundamental linguistic skills and a medium through which children and adults gain a large portion of their education, their information, their understanding of the world of affairs, their ideals, their sense of values, and their sense of appreciation. Morley (1991) states that listening is the most common communicative activity in daily life because we can expect to listen twice as much as we speak, four times more than we read, and five times more than we write. So, listening as a skill is assuming more and more weight in SL or FL classrooms than ever before.

**Differentiating Listening Skill from other Linguistic Skills**

Traditional labeling for reading and listening is as ‘passive’ skills, but, linguists believe that in listening, a listener is actively involved in guessing, anticipating, checking, interpreting, interacting and organizing by associating and accommodating his/her prior knowledge of meaning and form. Even as a receptive skill, listening differs greatly from reading as reading materials are printed and permanent enough where the learners are required to interact with the next sentence using the knowledge of the previous one while listening involves continuous material presentation where they have to respond to the immediate expression. From the viewpoint of ‘product’ or ‘process’, listening is more a process than a product that instantly shapes the understanding and utterances of the learners. So, we see that the foundation on which reading and writing skills are built is the spoken language. Again listening is fundamental to spoken language, as without listening anything we cannot reproduce or reply. So, it is obvious that listening influences other linguistic skills.

**Types of Listening**

Listening types become varied according to their purposes and objectives. The major types of listening are:

- Attentive listening,
Extensive listening, Intensive listening, Selective listening, and Interactive listening.

**Attentive listening**: Listeners often lapse attention for various reasons like loss of interest, inability to keep up with, losing track of goals, less confidence etc. So, attentiveness is a prior condition for this kind of listening.

**Extensive listening**: This type of listening promotes overall comprehension of a text and never requires the listeners to follow every word and understand them. Listeners need to comprehend the text as a whole, which is called global understanding.

**Intensive listening**: Intensive listening requires attention to specific items of language, sound or factual detail such as words, phrase, grammatical units, pragmatic units, sound changes, stress, intonation, pauses etc.

**Selective listening**: It involves listening the selected part of a text. Here, the focus is on the main parts of the discourse and by noticing these parts listener construct his/her understanding of the meaning of the whole text through inferring.

**Interactive listening**: This is a very advanced stage of listening practice as it implies social interaction in small groups which is a ‘true test’ of listening. In interactive listening, listener is required to take part in the interaction. It includes face-to-face conversations and telephone calls in which listener has a chance to ask for clarification, repetition, or slower speech from conversation partner.

**Aspects of Listening**

Aspects of listening are the ways of processing the text while listening. There are two important aspects of listening. They are bottom-up and top-down aspects of listening.

**Bottom-Up Aspect**: Bottom up processing helps the learners to utilize their linguistic knowledge to identify linguistic elements in an order from the smallest linguistic unit like phonemes (bottom) to the largest one like complete texts (top). They link the smaller units of the language together to form the larger parts and it is a linear process where meaning is derived automatically at the last stage. It is absolutely a ‘text based’ process where learners rely on the sounds, words and grammar in the message in order to create meaning.
Top-Down Aspect: Top down interpretation, on the other hand, requires learners to listen with their prior knowledge of topic, context, as well as knowledge of language to reconstruct the meaning using sounds as clues. This background knowledge activates a set of expectations that helps the listeners to interpret what is heard and to anticipate what will come next. It is used in the activities like listening for the main idea, predicting, drawing inferences, and summarizing where learners relate what they know and what they hear through listening comprehension.

Micro skills involved in Listening

Listening comprises component skills like -

- discriminating between sounds,
- recognizing words,
- identifying grammatical groupings of words,
- identifying expressions and sets of utterances that act to create meaning,
- connecting linguistic cues to non-linguistic and paralinguistic cues, and
- using background knowledge to predict and later to confirm meaning and recalling important words and ideas.

Further, a listener has to go through major three processes for using these skills:

Perception skills: The complete perception does not emerge from the source of sound only, listeners need to segment the stream of sound and detect word boundaries, contracted forms, vocabulary, stress on longer words, the significance of intonation and other language-related features.

Analysis skills: It is a very important stage because listeners categorize the received speech into meaningful sections, identify redundant material, keep hold of chunks of the sentences, think ahead, and use language data to anticipate what a speaker may be going to say.

Synthesis skills: Listening is thought as interplay between language and brain which requires the activation of contextual information and previous knowledge where listeners guess, organize and confirm meaning from the context.

However, none of these micro-skills is effective in isolation or is called listening. Therefore, successful listening refers to the integration of these three major component skills.

Steps/Stages of Listening
Listening skill, like any other skills, can be developed but can be developed best through stages only. The three-fold division of steps/stages of listening into pre-listening, while-listening, and post listening stage helps to develop listening skills in general.

Pre-listening Stage: Pre-listening stage activates learners knowledge of topics related to the theme of the listening texts. For example, some activities before listening may serve as preparation or warm-up for listening in several ways.

While-Listening Stage: While-listening stage requires the listener to be constantly alert and to pay attention to specific details.

After-listening Stage: After-listening stage requires the listener to retain and recollect information, assemble the various bits of information to create a big picture, to recreate a holistic discourse, and to place this discourse in a larger context. Activities in this stage help us to check the comprehension ability of the listeners. Therefore, good listening lessons go beyond the main listening task itself with related activities before and after the listening.

Factors involved in Effective Listening

Listening is an interactive skill. Thus, several factors affect the quality of listening comprehension. Let us discuss these factors one by one.

First, a listener must be physically fit. Here is an example. There is a One-Act play called ‘Post Early for Christmas’ where a pretty old man goes to a post office to collect his old age pension. The lady clerk asked him whether he has brought his book. He mishears the word book for cook. Then the lady says that he did not hear what she had said. Then the old man mishears again the word ‘said’ for bed. Thus, the confusion goes on for some time. This example tells us that a listener must be physically fit.

Secondly, the listener has to be in proper frame of mind. Otherwise, communication will be surely hampered. This is what happens in the ‘handkerchief scene’ in ‘Othello’. Othello has already been jaundiced. He is possessed by green-eyed jealousy. The more Desdimona pleads for Cassino, the more suspicious he gets. This happens because he is not in the proper mental frame. He is biased and prejudiced. Therefore, he hears what he wants to hear; not what Desdimona wants to say.
Thirdly, attention/concentration affects listening comprehension. One-day ‘Mr. X’ was travelling from Edinburgh to London by train. There were three local passengers sitting next to him. They were conversing. This is what transpired among them:

A: Is it Wimbley?
B: No, it’s Thursday.
C: So am I.

The second and the third speakers did not pay attention to the contribution made by others. As a result, second passenger thought that first passenger’s question was about the day of the week. As a result, he said that it was not Wednesday, but Thursday. The third passenger thought that the second one had referred to his being thirsty and so he said that he was thirsty too. Thus, lack of attention affected the process of communication.

Fourthly, the listening ability to listen between and beyond the utterance also affects our listening. Listening between and beyond the utterance is like visualizing the submerged portion of an iceberg. For example, accident took place because the captain of the ship named ‘Titanic’ failed to visualize the hugeness of the invisible part of the iceberg.

Fifthly, the listener’s ability to see through the motives behind the words affects listening comprehension. There is no better example for this than that of ‘King Lear’. The King could not penetrate the verbosity of his first two daughters; Regan and Goneril. They hyperbolically expressed their love for the old man. Cordelia, the youngest daughter devotedly loves him but does not use shallow and empty words. The king gets wrongly overwhelmed by the exaggerated expressions of the love the first and second daughters made and hence makes a hasty and wrong decision and consequently meets a tragic end.

Lastly, context plays an important role in effective listening. Let us look at the following example: ‘the door is open’. Obviously, taking out of its context, it expresses denotative meaning, which refers to some wooden/metallic or plastic door being open. However, when this utterance is used in the particular context, it may be anyone of the following things:

\[\text{☞ You may leave (said during a hot discussion)}\]
\[\text{☞ Why do not you close the door first? (Said during a romantic encounter)}\]

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Let us sit together and negotiate (encounter between the heads of two countries)

We straightway break into the house (said by a burglar to his accomplice before burglary)

So, we find that the same sentence can have several other meanings depending on the context it is used in.

Thus, there are several factors that influence the quality of listening and comprehension.

**Hindering factors of Listening**

Listening is probably the most difficult skill to master because when we listen, we have to process the whole gamut of verbal and non-verbal signals. Several factors affect this process. Let us talk about the three major types of hindering factors:

*Code related:* English is a funny and chaotic language. We do not speak words as they are spelt and spell words as they are uttered. It is a stress-timed language but Indian languages are syllable timed. Therefore, Indian learners find listening to British or American variety of English rather difficult. The code itself has certain features, which act as barriers.

*Encoder related:* The encoder may also create hurdles by using words and sentences, which are not listener friendly. For example, once a snuff-addict was travelling by bus. He had left his snuffbox at home. The person sitting next to him was also a snuff addict. When he saw the fellow passenger taking out his snuffbox from his pocket, this is what he said for requesting him for taking a pinch of tobacco: ‘Excuse me, would you mind if I would insert my digital extremities into your concavity and take a pinch of pulverized tobacco, which would cause a blissful ticklation in my nasal cavity’. Here, it is a linguistic barrier because the vocabulary used is rather too frozen. Sometimes, the speaker’s accent and tone also act as a barrier. Culture may also act as a barrier in communication. That is why as global communicators we need to bear in mind that what may be polite and acceptable in our culture may be rude and offending in another culture.

*Decoder related:* One major problem associated with the hearing is a physical impairment in any part of the hearing mechanism. Other problem related to hearing involves situational factors under the control of listeners and speakers. Sometimes
we cannot hear because the speaker’s voice is too soft and there are competing noises or because there are poor acoustics in the room. So, these are some major listening problems associated with the decoder.

In short, there are environmental (e.g. noise), psychological (e.g. prejudices), cultural (e.g. acceptable/ unacceptable; polite/ impolite), linguistic (e.g. difficult vocabulary/ complex grammar/ faulty pronunciation), physiological (e.g. deafness/ ageing), and perceptual (e.g. hearing what one wants to hear) barriers to listening.

**Goals of Teaching Listening Skills**

Nature has given each one of us just one tongue but two ears. There must be a purpose behind this. Perhaps nature wants us to listen more things and more carefully. We spend most of our waking time listening yet we are not perfect at listening. Therefore, the major goals of developing listening skills are to enable the learners to do the following things.

- Identify the context of the message i.e. the given facts
- Isolate the more central fact from peripheral parts of the message
- Connect the facts in some kind of logical sequence
- Infer other facts on the basis of those given
- Infer the attitude of the speaker from what is given
- React to the message in some normative way, i.e. to say, judge whether what is said is sincere, truthful, valuable, useful, attractive, etc.
- Expose ourselves to varied input

**1.2.3 Speaking Skill – A Description**

**Concept of Speaking**

Speaking is a productive language skill that cannot be separated from listening skill. In fact, from everyday communication point of view, speaking is probably the most required skill. For example, when a person migrates from one country to another country for education, business or tourism, the first skill that s/he requires is the speaking skill. S/he may not be able to read and write the foreign language, but s/he can survive in an alien environment if s/he can somehow speak the language of the host country.

**How Speaking Skill differ from Other Linguistic Skills**
Speaking is labeled as oral production and is one of the skills that students are to learn in their language development. The ability to converse is highly valued by students but teachers often find it a skill that is hard to develop. As, speaking is interrelated with the other skills, so, its development results in the development of the other skills. Speaking and listening are the reverse sides of the same coin. In other words, the two skills co-exist. When one person speaks, other person listens. The speaker and the listener interchange their roles and take turns to further spoken interaction.

**Types of Speaking**

Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. Unlike other skills, it is more complicated because it involves more than just pronouncing words. There are three kinds of speaking situations in which we find ourselves.

- **Interactive:** includes face to face conversation and telephone calls
- **Partially interactive:** giving a speech to a live audience
- **Non-interactive:** such as when recording a speech for a radio broadcast

**Micro skills involved in Speaking**

Speaking is more than talking. It involves thinking, imagination, sensitivity in listening, accuracy in the adjustment of the speech organs etc. So, if we need to improve speaking skills, we need to know which skills or which features learners need to develop. McCarthy & O’Keeffe (2004) states that the development of second language (L2) oral skills is a cognitively demanding undertaking and the success of an interaction often depends on production quality of the following micro skills:

- Pronounce the distinctive sounds of a language clearly enough so that people can distinguish them
- Use stress and rhythmic patterns and intonation patterns of the language clearly so that people can understand what is said
- Use the correct form of words. This may mean for example, changes in the tense, case or gender
- Put words together in correct word order
- Use vocabulary appropriately
- Use the register or language variety that is appropriate to the situation and the relationship to the conversation partner
Make clear to the listener the main sentence constituents, such as subjects, verb, object, by whatever means the language uses

Make the main ideas stand out from supporting ideas or information

Stages/Steps of Speaking

Traditionally, speaking is discussed with reference to three stages - presentation, practice, and production. Let us explain these stages briefly.

Presentation Stage: A teacher’s job at the primary school level is to present inputs. These inputs are primarily aural inputs. Much depends on how the teacher delivers his lessons on speaking. However, the fact remains that in the context of English as second/ foreign language, teacher talk is the main source of input. Because of this, it is all the more important for the teacher to present adequate, appropriate and accurate input in the classroom. The teacher sets a model for the learner. The presentation can be made by the teacher or by a proficient learner.

Practice Stage: The second stage is that of practice. Whatever language items or skills, have been presented by the teacher those need to be practiced by the learner primarily in the classroom and occasionally outside the classroom. The main purpose of the practice stage is to consolidate the inputs given during the presentation stage. Depending on the methodology, language items and skills may be practiced individually, in pairs, or in groups. Practice can be given through drilling, which may be quite mechanical and mindless. Alternatively, practice can be given in meaningful ways through simulations and situation. Such practice may require adaptation (addition, deletion, modification). Practice stage may follow presentation stage immediately or after some period. Depending on the type of input, the purpose of the input, and other factors, the teacher may demand either immediate or delayed practice. The objective of presentation and practice stages is to enable the learner to produce language and to perform functions using language.

Production Stage: It can be done individually or in pairs and groups. Teacher’s choice of methods/strategies will determine the quality and quantity of production. At the primary school level, the focus should be on holistic production. However, discrete item production may also help. Production needs to be evaluated in terms of matter and manner. Matter refers to ideas whereas manner refers to organization of
ideas, pronunciation, stress, pauses, intonation, tone of voice etc. Teacher’s feedback on spoken performance by the learner plays a vital role in language learning.

With the advent of the process-approach to language skills, ELT experts began to talk about preparation stage that happens after the practice stage and before the production stage. Thus, before learners produce language, they brainstorm on a particular topic/situation and jot down ideas, supporting details and language required to talk about those ideas. During the discussion, members of the group negotiate the meaning of a task, offer suggestions, agree and disagree. In the process, they produce quite a lot of language. It has been noticed that preparation stage enhances the quality and quantity of production.

**Aspects of speaking**

Language learners need to recognize that speaking involves three areas of knowledge

- **Mechanics (pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary):** It refers to using the right words in the right order with correct pronunciation.

- **Functions (transaction and interaction):** It refers to the fact that when clarity of message is essential (transaction/information exchange) and when precise understanding is not required (interaction/relationship building).

- **Social and cultural rules and norms (turn taking, rate of speech, length of pauses between speakers, relative roles of participants):** It refers to the understanding of how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what, and for what reason.

**Factors involved in Effective Speaking**

Speaking is not just one skill but a cluster of skills that depend on several factors. An effective and efficient speaker exploits various factors in order to express his or her thoughts with clarity. Let us discuss these factors briefly:

First, accent makes a world of difference. If the speaker’s accent is faulty, the listener will find it hard to decode the message. Verbal delivery includes various sub points like the voice-quality, pitch, and articulation by the speaker. The voice quality shows a person’s attitude and motivation about a particular topic. It should usually be upbeat and friendly and yet concerned. It is best to use varying pitch depending on what point one is trying to make. The speed at which we speak also affects our
speaking skills. Pausing during main ideas can also help to create time for listeners to gain information while allowing the speaker to organize thoughts. In other words, speech must be intelligible. Therefore, the factors that reduce intelligibility can be categorized into phonological, lexical, idiomatic, grammatical and even discourse level factors.

**Obstructing factors to Speaking**

There are physiological, psychological, environmental and linguistic barriers to spoken communication. Some examples of these barriers are given here. Stuttering is a physiological barrier. Our biases or prejudices towards the hearer or the topic may also act as barriers. Noise is an example of environmental barrier. However, these barriers are somewhat beyond the speaker. The barrier that a speaker can comfortably overcome is the linguistic barrier. Inadequate mastery of the phonological, lexical, and syntactic systems of the language may act as a barrier. Attitudinal barriers adversely affect the development of spoken skill. For example, the speaker may look down upon English as the language of colonizer and may decide not to speak in English. A speaker may think that English is a superior language or a difficult and chaotic language. As a result, s/he may avoid mastering it. Occasionally, the inability to approximate one of the standard varieties may demotivate the speaker.

**Goals/Purposes of Teaching Speaking Skills**

In the context of teaching English as a foreign/second language, we can think of five important goals of developing language skills, especially speaking skills.

*First* goal is to enable the learners to use the English language fluently in its spoken as well as written form. Fluency refers to the language user’s ability to speak and write the respective language with ease, comfort and facility. A fluent user of a language does not grope for words. The language comes to the user quite spontaneously.

*Second* goal is to enable the learners to use the language confidently. Many of the rural and semi-urban learners are diffident, shy, and nervous due to lack of availability of the language in the family and in the neighborhood, due to detrimental attitudes that prevail in the society, and due to motivational factors. The teacher’s job
is to instill confidence in the learners’ through positive feedback and learner-centered activities. Fluency and confidence have mutual impact.

**Third** goal is to equip the learners with communicative and strategic competence so that they use the language appropriately. This requires the teacher to go beyond sentence-grammar. Additionally, it is essential for the teacher to make the learner aware of the crucial significance of the rules of use, which override rules of grammar. Mere grammatical competence is inadequate and needs to be supplemented by social, situational, interpersonal, and cultural competencies.

**Fourth** goal is to enable the learners to use the language accurately. The learner has to pronounce words in isolation as well as in connected speech correctly. S/he has to master choice of words and selection of grammatical structures. S/he has to develop the ability to use one grammatical form to perform several speech acts and several grammatical forms to perform one speech act. Furthermore, s/he has to develop cultural competence because different cultures realize speech functions differently i.e. what is acceptable/polite in one culture may not be acceptable/polite in another culture.

**Fifth** goal is to develop linguistic creativity among the learners. This can be done through role-play, vocabulary and grammar games, problem solving and brain storming activities, and playing with the words.

In short, the five important goals of developing speaking skills are as follows:

- To enable the learner to use English accurately
- To enable the learner to use English confidently
- To equip the learner with awareness of social and cultural appropriateness
- To enable the learner to use English fluently
- To enable the learner to use it creatively

### 1.2.4 Reading Skill – A Description

**Meaning of Reading Skill**

Reading is a receptive and interactive skill. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one’s spoken language. And comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences, and connected text.
**Types of Reading:**

Grellet (1981) talked about four different kinds of reading. They are:

- **Skimming**
- **Scanning**
- **Extensive reading**
- **Intensive reading**

**Skimming:** Skimming is used to quickly gather the most important information or the gist. It involves running our eyes over the text and noting important information. The examples of skimming are reading the Newspaper (quickly to get the general news of the day), Magazines (quickly to discover which articles you would like to read in more detail), Business and Travel Brochures (quickly to get informed) etc.

**Scanning:** Scanning is used to find a particular piece of information. We run our eyes over the text looking for the specific piece of information we need. The examples of scanning are reading the ‘What's on TV’ section of newspaper, a train / airplane schedule, a conference guide etc.

**Extensive reading:** Extensive reading is used to obtain a general understanding of a subject and includes reading longer texts for pleasure, as well as business books. The examples of extensive reading are reading a novel before going to bed or reading a magazine article that interests us.

**Intensive reading:** Intensive reading is used on shorter texts in order to extract specific information. It includes very close accurate reading for detail. We use intensive reading skills to grasp the details of a specific situation. The examples of intensive reading are reading a bookkeeping report, an insurance claim etc.

**Micro skills involved in Reading**

Teaching reading comprehension is viewed as a mastery of these skills.

- **Word attack skills** help the reader to figure out new words
- **Comprehension skills** help the reader to predict the next word, phrase, or sentence quickly enough to speed recognition
- **Fluency skills** help the readers to see larger segments, phrases, and groups of words as wholes
- **Critical reading skills** help the reader to see the relationship of ideas and use these in reading with meaning and fluency
Aspects of Reading

Of all the communications skills, reading has probably the greatest ‘serviceability’ or general usefulness. Moreover, it has high surrender value (as a language learning device) and educative value. Independent reading activity promotes intellectual growth and self-reliance. The two important aspects of the reading skill are:

Word-recognition skills: Reading has been described as a process of sight-sound sense. At the initial stage, reading involves the mastery of certain mechanical /physical operations like the recognition of printed or written symbols i.e. sight-recognition, phonics, word-analysis and reading in sense groups.

Skills of comprehension: Once the mechanics of reading have been mastered, it becomes a process of thinking under the stimulus of the written page. It involves attachment of meanings to them so as to get the message.

Stages/Steps of Reading

The five stages of reading are essential for understanding written English. These stages are not difficult to master if they are taught correctly.

First Stage of Reading: Reading involves learning the code and applying it to letters as they are grouped together to form words. Sometimes the code is quite simple, as with sounds of single letters in short words such as ‘bit’ or ‘jam’. At other times the code is complex, as in words like ‘classicism’, where the first C sounds like the letter K, and the second C copies the sound of S. Therefore, the crucial first step is the word attack skills.

Second Stage of Reading: Only after the decoding process is operative, the brain can be freed to higher level comprehension skills.

Third Stage of Reading: Evaluation involves a careful assessment of that which has been read and comprehended.

Fourth Stage of Reading: Once the information has been read and properly evaluated, it can be applied in a meaningful way by the reader.

Fifth Stage of Reading: When the first four steps are functioning comfortably, the reader finds that reading is a pleasant and effective experience. The reader develops required fluency at this stage.

Factors involved in Effective Reading
Gardner (1999) talked of multiple intelligences and different learning styles. Each one of us is good in respective fields depending upon the type of intelligence we possess. Similarly, we have different types of readers depending on which factor dominates. Thus, the major factors that affect reading skills are –

- Intellectual factor
- Emotional factor
- Educational factor
- Physical factor
- Perceptual factor
- Social factor

**Intellectual and Emotional Factors:** Snow (2001) talked about the scientific culture and the literary culture. The scientific culture is the culture of the head or the intellect. The literary culture is the culture of the heart or emotions. Some people are head-dominated and can be termed as ‘thinkers’. They like intellectually stimulating text. However, this does not mean that they are poor at reading emotionally charged text. Heart-dominated people are ‘feelers’. They like reading emotionally stirring text. However, this does not imply that they do not read intellectually challenging discourses. Thus, the head and the heart, the intellect and the emotions, etc. affect our reading skills.

**Educational Factor:** The reader with an educational background has some impact on his/her reading skills. Interpretations and associations of words and sentences depend on educational environment. For example, interpretation of words such as ‘mouse’, ‘virus’, ‘corrupt’ and ‘burn’ will depend on whether we are reading a book on computer science or an everyday book. Similarly, the understanding of words like ‘orphan’ and ‘widow’ will depend on whether we are reading a book on journalism or an everyday book. These examples show that an educational factor is one significant determinant of reading skills.

**Physical Factor:** Physical factor is yet another factor that affects reading. For example, the eyesight of the reader will have some influence on the quality and speed of reading. By the same token, the quality of paper, the size of font, the width of margins, the vividness of pictures, the attractiveness of colors, and appropriateness of format will affect reading skills.
**Perceptual Factor:** Our perception also affects our reading skills. We can think of the story of the ‘six blind men and an elephant’. The six blind men are six readers and the elephant is like the text in the story. The six blind men perceived the same elephant as six different things in the story. That is nothing but perceptual factor affecting the interpretation of six different people.

**Social Factor:** The social factors also affect the nature, the quality, and the outcome of reading skills. Different cultures have social norms of acceptability that positively or negatively influence not only the choice of text but also the type of response that we give to the text. The obvious examples that surface in the mind are Salman Rushdie’s ‘Satanic Verses’, Taslima Nasrin’s ‘Lajja’, D. H. Lawrence’s ‘Lady Chatterley’s Lover’ etc. It was the social factor that led to the ban of these novels.

**Barriers to Effective Reading**

Reading is a complex combination of skills. Several factors affect an individual's ability to read. Let us discuss these barriers at length one by one.

**Linguistic barriers:** Reading is a matter of decoding literal, metaphorical, and implied meaning and messages. Therefore, one of the major barriers is caused by choice of words. Syntactic ambiguity is yet another barrier to reading. For example, the following sentence is susceptible to dual interpretation: ‘Visiting research scholars can be a headache’. Idiomatic expression can also create reading problems. For example, Arabic speakers of English understand idioms differently. In British English the idiom ‘day after day’ means ‘everyday’ but in Arab English it means ‘alternate day’. Since, the British meaning and Arabic meaning of idioms are different, both the Arab reader reading British text and an English reader reading a text written by an Arab user of English language will have problem. Thus, linguistic barriers include lexical, syntactic, and idiomatic problems.

**Psychological barriers:** Psychological barriers refer to motivation level of the readers. Motivation can be intrinsic or extrinsic i.e. intrinsic motivation being internal to the reader and extrinsic motivation being external to him/her. In order words, some learners are internally driven to read and to listen or to write and to speak. They do not need an external propeller. Therefore, lack of interest on the part of reader may act as a barrier to effective reading.
Cultural barriers: Cultural barriers also hinder appropriate interpretation of written messages. A Hindu or a Muslim reader, for example, who may not be aware of the exact denotations or connotations of events like ‘Easter’ and ‘Thanksgiving’, may not process related information properly. Conversely, a western reader unfamiliar with culture specific concepts and speech functions may not understand the following expressions from Indian English novels: ‘Seventh month ceremony’, ‘Thread ceremony’, ‘Communal meal’ ‘Where does your wealth reside?’, ‘Sardar Sahib, you are a big man and we are small radishes from an unknown garden’ etc. When a non-Indian reader come across such expression and speech functions, which are culture bound, they fail to comprehend. Therefore, culture bound language usually act as a barrier to effective reading.

Thus, the major types of barriers to effective reading are linguistic, psychological, cultural etc.

Goals/Purposes of Teaching Reading Skills
Reading is an interactive and problem-solving process of making meaning from texts. The ability to read with understanding is an essential skill. In a second /foreign language teaching/learning situation also, reading skills occupy a very significant place. Therefore, when we aim at developing reading skills at the school level, we need to keep in view several purposes/goals. The various goals of teaching reading skills are discussed below-

Firstly, our aim is to familiarize our pupils with various types of texts such as letters, reports, poems, advertisements, crosswords, puzzles, railway timetables, telephone directories etc. All these text types have different formats and styles.

Secondly, we want to enable the students to read the lines. In other words, we want to teach them how to comprehend literal/surface meaning and suggested meaning. For example, they need to understand the literal as well as suggested meanings. Let us take the example of the last four lines of Robert Frost’s ‘Stopping by Woods’:

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.
Now, is the poet referring to actual woods and miles or is he hinting at life as woods and miles as journey of life and sleep as death. The teacher of reading skills must see to it that learners understand both meanings; the literal and metaphorical. Moreover, we aim at enabling the learner to read beyond lines. For example, when we teach George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, we need to bring it to the learners’ notice that the real meaning of the novel lies not in the lines or between the lines, but beyond the lines. In other words, it is not a story of animals; nor is it a fable, but it is a sardonic comment on the failure of communism. This proposition is not stated explicitly in the novel; it needs to be deduced after a careful reading beyond the lines.

*Thirdly,* we want our learners to be able to skim and scan various types of texts. Skimming refers to understanding the gist of a text. For example, when we read Martin Luther King Junior’s ‘*I Have a Dream*’, which gives various examples, we conclude that the central point that the speaker wants to make is the need for equality, fraternity, and brotherhood. Thus, the whole speech can be skimmed or distilled in just three words. Scanning is a matter of locating specific ideas/information in a text. For instance, when we read Wordsworth’s ‘*Solitary Reaper*’, we can scan words and expressions which refer to the singer being solitary like ‘single’, ‘solitary’, ‘by herself’ and ‘alone’.

*Fourthly,* another aim of developing reading skills is to enrich vocabulary. For instance, when we teach George Herbert’s poem ‘*The Pulley*’, we draw the attention of the learners to three different usage of the word ‘rest’. The poem is about god’s gift to man. God gave man strength, duty, wisdom, honor and pleasure but He reserved ‘rest’ (peace of mind) because He thought that if He would give man rest or peace of mind, man would rest (relax and forget god). Therefore, God gave man ‘the rest’ (remaining gifts). Thus, poet plays with the word ‘rest’. While teaching this poem, the teacher can enrich the lexical knowledge of the learner by highlighting different meanings of the same word.

*Fifthly,* inferencing is a higher level reading skill, which we need to develop in our pupils. For example, when the learners read Tagore’s ‘*The Home Coming*’, which ends with the sentence: ‘So, holidays have come’, they feel free to interpret the ending. This story is about a boy who lives with his uncle’s family for schooling but his aunt mistreats him and as a result, he grows more and more home sick and finally
falls seriously ill. Tagore ends the story with the sentence that we have quoted above and leaves the reader free to interpret the ending. What do the ‘holidays’ signify? Do they mean actual holiday or do they mean death? The reader has to infer here. So, when we read, we have to discover the intention of the author as an intelligent reader. To sum up, reading is a very important skill as it helps us understand the content and enrich our language. Our reading also helps us to become good speakers, writers as well as good communicators. In short, these are the major goals of developing reading skills at school as well as at advanced level.

1.2.5 Writing Skill - A Description

What Writing Skill Is?

Of the four language skills in English, writing is considered to be the most complex and difficult skill to master. It is an active and productive/expressive skill. Many people think that it is a painful and slow process. This difficulty, according to Richards (2006) lies not only in generating and organizing of ideas but also in translating these ideas into readable texts. Therefore, in a way, writing represents our thoughts and ideas.

Writing Skill and Other Linguistic Skills – The Relationship

Like speech, writing has been considered a powerful mode of communication. After all, one writes with the purpose of being understood. Unlike speech, writing is not always for the audience present and hence it demands clear and comprehensive message. While we speak, we use a variety of prosodic features such as pitch, loudness, speed, rhythm, pauses and so on that help us to get the feedback from listeners but this does not happen in case of writing where the context is created through the words alone and without the direct interaction between the writer and the reader.

Types of Writing

There are three major types of writing. They are -

- Descriptive Writing,
- Narrative Writing, and
- Expository Writing.

**Descriptive Writing:** Descriptive writing is a style of writing which focuses on describing a character, an event or a place in great details. It is sometimes poetic in
nature. It describes places, people, events, situations or locations in a highly-detailed manner. For example, ‘Daffodils’ by William Wordsworth is a descriptive poem. It describes daffodils in comparison with other natural phenomenon. At the same time, it records the personal impressions and reactions of the poet. Thus, descriptive writing is one major type.

**Narrative writing:** Narrative writing is another major type. Novels, short stories, poetry, biographies fall in the category of narrative writing. Let us illustrate the narrative structure with the help of a poem called ‘The Pulley’ by George Herbert. His poem narrates a divine event during which god created man and gave him gifts like strength, beauty, wisdom, honor, pleasure. It is a dramatic poem with a conversational tone, with God, soliloquizing intermittently.

**Expository Writing:** The third type of writing is expository writing. Expository writing is a subject-oriented writing style, in which the main focus is to explain something in a logical order and sequence. This is one of the most common types of writing styles, which we find in text books. It answers the following questions:

- What is it?
- What is it for?
- What does it mean?
- How/why does it happen?
- What is the result?
- How good/bad is it?

In other words, it examines the nature, significance, origin, result/outcome and utility of phenomenon.

**Aspects of Writing Skills**

Tickoo (2010) says that writing is relatively easy because unlike speakers, writers get time not only to shape ideas with care but to revise and rewrite what they write. There are three main aspects of writing, which are called PAF:

- Purpose/Objective
- Audience/Readers
- Function

**Purpose/Objective:** A text is always written with a purpose or objective. As a writer, one should be clear about the purpose or the objective of writing. Am I writing with
any special purpose? Or why am I writing? The answers to these questions will make the idea clear and can bring out a good piece of writing.

**Audience /Readers:** Any communication is meant for expressing ideas from one to one. In case of writing, the audience is not present but at least if the writer wants, s/he can write keeping the target group in mind. So, ‘Who is going to read?’ or ‘For whom am I writing?’ has to be made clear. As a student also, one should be clear for the audience or the readers either they are teachers or students or any other because after all this decides the nature of writing.

**Function:** The function decides the nature of writing. Am I going to write a report, a letter, or just a write-up etc. that can lead us to a good and coherent piece of writing? In fact, this may be covered under one word i.e. ‘to plan’ - to prepare oneself for writing. It is rightly said: ‘Failing to prepare is preparing to fail’. For planning writing, one can think on following lines:

- What is my objective of writing?
- What are the main idea and the supporting ideas?
- Who is going to read my written text?
- For which specific function am I writing?
- Which idea should come first?
- How should I organize all ideas?

**Micro skills involved in Writing**

Writing always has become difficult to teach or to learn because it involves a different kind of mental process, which includes the sub skills like – drafting, editing, revising, organizing etc. The micro-skills involved in the writing are:

- To use orthography correctly, including the script, spelling, and punctuation conventions
- To use correct forms of words, i.e. using forms that express the right tense, or case or gender
- To put words together in correct word order
- To use correct vocabulary
- To use style appropriate to the genre and audience
- To make the main sentence constituents, such as subject, verb, and object, clear to the reader
To make the main ideas distinct from supporting ideas or information
To make the text coherent, so that other people can follow the development of the ideas
To judge how much background knowledge the audience has on the subject and make clear what they do not know

Stages of Writing
It is difficult to start writing straightway. Even experienced writers do not write that way. Before putting pen to paper, they do some brainstorming and make an inventory of points. It is a conscious, deliberate, efforted process. That is why it is a good idea to segment the process into three stages: pre writing, while writing, and post writing.

Pre-writing: In order to enable the learner to write with ease and confidence, the teacher needs to give them a pre-writing task. This is like doing a warming up activity before a major physical exercise. In this stage, the learner makes a list of ideas and divides or classifies them into main and sub-ordinate ideas. Then puts them in some sort of order, which may be logical order, chronological order or psychological order.

While-writing: The pre-writing stage gives the learner the raw material which can be described as bricks, cement, mortar, steel etc. with which he can construct a house or an edifice. The while-writing stage is the assembling phase. It involves the actual act of composing. Here the learner puts things together in a cohesive and coherent manner.

Post-writing: The writing stage gives us the draft. When the draft is ready, the learner applies a reader’s perspective in order to check the accuracy and appropriateness of the draft in the post-writing stage. S/he goes over whatever s/he has written. S/he checks the spelling, grammar, punctuation, collocation, tone, and so-on. S/he edits every paragraph, scrutinizes each word/ sentence, and questions the relevance, pertinences and indispensability of every segment. If necessary, the writer ruthlessly trims superfluous and redundant expressions. S/he adds missing links and checks the composition against the criterion of brevity, clarity, focus and expressivity.

Factors involved in Effective Writing
All educated people can write, but not everybody can write effectively. Writing is an interactive skill and requires continuous practice. As Bacon says, ‘Writing makes an exact man’. Several factors go into the making of reader-friendly outcome-oriented and effective writing.

**Accuracy of Language:** The most important factor involved in effective writing is accuracy of language, which includes aspects such as spelling, handwriting, grammar, punctuation and so on. Another factor which is closely associated with this is appropriateness.

**Collection of Ideas:** Yet another factor that influences the quality of composition is the collection of ideas. As we have stated earlier, we need to pool together ideas. Certain ideas are prominent ones and certain others are minor ones. Collection of ideas is followed by selection of ideas and their classification. We can divide ideas into essential, necessary and disposable ideas. Essential ideas are the backbone, flesh and blood of writing. Necessary and disposable points are supporting details.

**Context:** Context plays a vital role in writing. It is the context that acts as a magnet and keeps together the thoughts, actions and so-forth. We cannot think of writing without context. Every effective piece of writing centers on some sort of context.

**Division of Composition into Paragraphs:** One more factor that has impact on the effectiveness of writing is division of composition into paragraphs. A paragraph displays lexical choices, grammatical preferences, and selection of discourse markers. These things affect the texture of writing.

**Organization:** One of the most important factors that makes/mars composition is organization. We usually think of organization in terms of introduction, development and conclusion. The introduction tells the reader what are going to say. The development/main body tells the reader the main things. The conclusion tells the reader what we have already said.

So, the different significant factors that affect writing can be clarity, awareness of audience, knowledge of topic, situationality, acceptability, intertextuality, cohesion, coherence, accuracy of language, appropriateness of tone, collection and selection of ideas, classification of ideas, organization/structure, contextualization, etc.

**Hindering Factors of Writing**
There are several obstacles involved in effective writing:
Clarity of Purpose: One major barrier is lack of clarity of purpose. A writer needs to know why he is writing and whom he is writing for. Knowledge of the purpose will have impact on the quality of writing. Quite often, writers do not know whether they are writing to inform, inspire, instruct or entertain.

Insufficient mastery of the grammar: Insufficient mastery of the grammar of the language and inadequate vocabulary can act as barrier. If the writer is not a master of the grammar in which he is writing, there will be no variety in sentence construction. Consequently, his writing will be grammatically tedious. Inadequate repertoire of words will handicap the writer. As a result, he will not be able to express semantic subtleties and nuances.

Inability to formulate topic sentences and create a network of lexical sets: Inability to formulate topic sentences and create a network of lexical sets/word families may act as restrictive influence and hamper the quality of texture of writing.

Ambiguity: Ambiguity can be yet another barrier to effective composition. Obviously, this is related to inadequate mastery of vocabulary and syntax. Ambiguity in literature may be a welcome thing but in legal and other types of writing, it acts as a barrier.

Goals/Purposes of Teaching Writing

Of all the four language skills, writing is perhaps the most difficult skill to develop. The various goals of teaching writing skills at the school level are as follows:

- To enable the learners to recognize various aspects of writing skills by drawing their attention to the difference between ‘p’ and ‘q’ and ‘b’ and d’ and so on. It is very important for them to familiarize himself/herself with such distinctions because in the absence of such awareness, the learners will not be in a position to distinguish between words such as pick and quick or big and dig.

- To sensitize the learners to the difference between upper case and lower case letters of the alphabet. Learners need to be aware of the uniformity of the size of various letters. Then they need to know the phenomenon of silent letters. Teachers can create awareness of unspoken letters in words like psychology; pneumonia, receipt, debt etc through dictation. Learners also need to be made conscious of the letter sound correspondence. For
example, the first letter of the English alphabet ‘A’ is pronounced in five different ways in words such as ‘at’, ‘father’, fall, fate, woman. This is very important because written language through a graphic representation of spoken languages deviates from the latter.

To make the learners made aware of various punctuation marks such as comma, semi-colon, question mark, and so on as well as their functions.

To familiarize learners with the structure of a paragraph that consists of key words and topic sentences. The topic sentence is like pivot around which all other sentences rotate. This is very important because many of our learners do not know how to put sentences together in a cohesive manner. Related to the above goal is the goal of familiarizing learners with devices of cohesion and coherence. Thus, one important goal of teaching writing skills at school level is to bring to the notice of the learners that cohesion and coherence are essential qualities of good composition.

To draw the attention of the learners to various styles of writing such as formal, informal and causal. They need to know that the style of writing depends on topic, occasion and relationship. The topic may be technical or non-technical, ceremonial or friendly, and the relationship may be symmetrical or asymmetrical or soliditary-governed and power-governed.

To draw the learners attention to difference between sentence-grammar and discourse-grammar.

To sensitize the learner to various formats of writing such as letters, timetable, poems, one-act plays, advertisements etc. Later at the production stage, s/he will be better equipped to produce genre-specific format. Therefore the learners must be exposed to various types of writing such as descriptive, narrative, expository, classificatory, definitional, causatory, and argumentative.

To explain the difference between spoken and written language to all learners. Otherwise, their speech will be very bookish and their writing will be very casual.
In short, the goals of teaching writing at school stage are recognition of various facets of writing which is a pre-requisite for accurate, appropriate and result-oriented production. When the learner masters the basic skills and facts of writing, s/he is expected to reflect his/her mastery and awareness in his/her composition.

1.3.0 Stimulating Children’s Creativity and Curiosity - A Chief Task of School Curriculum

Creativity is an inborn qualification and the development of it has recently been given official recognition as one of the overarching aims of the school curriculum. The curriculum should enable pupils to think creatively and critically, to solve problems and to make a difference for the better. It should give them the opportunity to become creative innovative, enterprising, and capable of leadership to equip them for their future lives as workers and citizens (QCA, 1999). Therefore, the goal of School Education is not only to teach, but also to stimulate the development of creativity among children in every ways. NACCCE (1999) emphasized on the creative and cultural development of young people through formal and informal education. Further, it stated that developing creativity should be seen as a general function of education. Educators are being increasingly faced with the ever-growing call for entrepreneurial citizens who value openness, diversity, and creativity. This demands that a school’s curriculum must be open and flexible enough to accommodate these new perspectives. Since, creative ability is the most important domain of human behavior, so, stimulating children’s creativity and curiosity remains the chief task of school curriculum.

1.3.1 Creativity Development of Young Children in Elementary School Classroom – A Discussion

Every child is born with creative potential, but this potential may be stifled if care is not taken to nurture and stimulate creativity. Young children are naturally curious. They wonder about people and the world. Even before they enter primary school, they already have a variety of learning skills acquired through questioning, inquiring, searching, manipulating, experimenting, and playing. Children prefer to learn in creative ways rather than just memorizing information provided by teachers or parents. Basantia (2006) stated that elementary stage is a foundation stage of one’s life, so
proper nourishment in this stage leads the child towards proper development of his/her cognitive ability and unfolding of his/ her creative ability. Berk (1994) reported that children in traditional facts and memory classrooms exhibit less creative behavior than those from non-traditional open classrooms, which offer more choice and hands on experience. Therefore, elementary school classroom should ensure creativity development among young children.

1.3.2 Operational Definition of Creativity

It is a difficult task to define and conceptualize creativity, because, it is a very complex area. Different philosophers, psychologists and thinkers have attempted to talk about creativity. Each one of them has tried to throw light on various aspects of creativity. We need to put together all these perceptions and understanding of the notion of creativity. Basically creativity exhibits itself in some sort of response or behavior. Whenever it reveals itself, it displays novelty and originality. Creativity involves playfulness, curiosity, sensitivity, self awareness, independence, imagination, discovery and invention. However, Torrance (1963) defined creativity in terms of divergent thinking, which involves fluency, flexibility, originality, and production of many new ideas. Guilford (1967) reported that fluency, flexibility, and originality are considered as important divergent production abilities because they contribute to the more complex construction of creativity. However, according to National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (1999) creativity is an imaginative activity fashioned so as to yield an outcome that is of value as well as original’. Craft (2000) stated that ‘creativity involves being imaginative, going beyond the obvious, being aware of one’s own unconventionality, being original in some way. It is not necessarily linked with a product-outcome’. From all these above definitions, we find three main tenets of creativity i.e. fluency, flexibility, and originality. The meanings of these three tenets are as the following:

**Fluency:** Fluency refers to the ability to produce many numbers of unrepeated ideas in a given-task. The more the number of ideas a person produces, the higher is his/her fluency ability.

**Flexibility:** Flexibility refers to the ability of the individual to produce different categories or varieties of ideas. That means a person’s movement of thinking from
one category to other categories regarding a particular task. It indicates the varieties of thinking.

**Originality:** It is the ability to produce new or unusual ideas.

### 1.3.3 Can Creativity Be Stimulated? - Some Research Based Discussion

Can creativity be stimulated? - Was a debatable question for a long time in the field of education. It was believed that creativity is an inherited quality and the environment has a little to do for it. Now scientific studies have proved that creativity can be stimulated. Almost all the educationists, psychologists and other scholars in the field of creativity have agreed on the point that the teaching learning plays a vital role in developing creative abilities in individual students (Basantia, 2006). Bowkett (2007) stated that the concept of creativity was fraught with myths and negative stereotypes, so, it prevented people from being creative. Further he stated that enhancing creativity means dispelling these beliefs. Creativity like any other ability must be noticed and nurtured to bloom. Therefore, the teacher should be aware of the need to develop the understanding that there are channels for directing creative energy into constructive endeavor and that people need to be creative for the maintenance of the virility of our civilization. Nirpharake (1983) in his study aimed at developing creative thinking in the Secondary School biology students and found that short-term treatment of two lessons produced differences in fluency and flexibility scores of the students. The experimental studies conducted by Torrance (1962, 1972), Khatena (1976), Osborn (1957), Miller (1974), and Gulati (1995) have shown that the use of appropriate teaching–learning strategies enhances creativity. It is understood from these studies that the children who are taught with appropriate teaching strategies do much better job in terms of new ideas than those who are not initiated into this kind of training. Therefore, it is sure that we can develop/stimulate creativity among school children.

### 1.3.4 How Creative Thinking Be Stimulated? - Some Guided Strategies

Realizing the importance of developing creativity among the students, the teachers, planners, and other competent personnel in the school/education have tried their best to extend the present traditional classrooms to creativity-centered classrooms in order to utilize the children’s enquiry, inventive and innovative abilities. Creative thinking
techniques are conscious and deliberate procedures for producing new combinations of ideas. In the area of creativity in school education, number of studies has been conducted to stimulate creative abilities of school children and the results found in such studies are encouraging. These studies include use of different types of teaching programmes, methods, and instructional materials for developing creative abilities of the learners. Researchers like Covington and Crutchfield (1965), Ripple and Dacey (1967), Otton and Crutchfield (1969), Dacey (1970), Sporburg (1971), Schuler (1974) used productive thinking programme to foster creative ability among primary school children. There are other types of researches that developed instructional materials for developing creative ability of the students. Myers and Torrance (1965, 1966) have developed idea-books in order to foster creativity among elementary school children. There are other researchers who worked with different types of media, modules, silent films etc. for fostering creativity and found them effective for developing creativity (Ridge, 1976; Sharma, 1995; Sefton-Green, 1999).

In Indian set-up, Patel (1987), Rai (1988) and many others tried to show the effectiveness of brain-storming technique/method for facilitating creativity. Nirpharake (1983) designed a study to develop an integrated programme of creativity training and used Torrance Test of Creative thinking as the criterion measure and finally it has been proved significantly effective. Prasad (1979), and Mohammad (1989) conducted a study to find out the effect of discovery method of teaching on creative thinking abilities of the students and it was found significantly effective in developing fluency, flexibility, and originality dimensions of creativity.

1.3.5 How do the Subjects of Teaching Matter for Fostering Creativity among Children

Creativity is a notion discussed in science and technology, creative writing, linguistics, psychology, fine arts, advertising, and various other disciplines. The notion has drawn the attention of philosophers, educationists, writers and physical scientists in recent times. Thinkers have felt the need to cultivate lateral thinking and creative attitude as human progress and welfare depends on creative human resources in the world. Robinson (2001) stated that creativity and imagination are key resources in a knowledge driven economy. However, creativity is not confined to special people or to particular subject. It pertains to every aspect of the curriculum
and every subject taught in schools. NACCCE, (1999) stated that creativity is possible in all areas of human activity, including the arts, sciences, at work, at play and in all other areas of daily life. All people have creative abilities and we all have them differently. When individuals find their creative strengths, it can have an enormous impact on self-esteem and on overall achievement. The studies of Torrance (1962), Craft (1999) and many others provide successful evidences that creativity can be developed through teaching of different school subjects. Therefore, creative abilities must be developed among our school children through the teaching of different school subjects. All the school subjects starting from language, literature to science, art and craft have their own divergent/creative thinking area but the ranges of scope for divergent thinking vary from subject to subject. According to Hudson (1973), the subjects like language, literature, social studies, art and craft etc. provide greater scope to the students to develop their creative abilities than the subjects like science, mathematics etc.

1.3.6 Concept of Linguistic Creativity
Languages are not always creative, but they have enormous potential to be so. They are used deliberately to create works of art, and for spontaneous communication. Learning a language is a creative exercise because languages are so vast and complex, and each user needs to use and combine elements of knowledge in new ways constantly. Language study also lends itself to creativity as it can be seen to embrace other disciplines with endless scope for doing so in new ways. Language learning by its very nature involves communication - the human dimension of this is open to the imagination and individual character of each person. This gives vast scope for creative responses and explorations. In relation to language teaching and learning, everything potentially embodies creativity. So, linguistic creativity is an essential and pervasive, but multi dimensional characteristic of all human beings (irrespective of age, education, intelligence, social status etc.). It is observable as a feature or product in a language. It is manifested in all domains of language (lexis, grammar, text and discourse), the results of which may or may not become conventionalized and therefore entrenched in a particular language. It is fundamentally an empirical phenomenon and the notion of new meaning is central to this definition of linguistic creativity. Chomsky (1965) stated that an essential
property of language is that it provides the means for expressing indefinitely many thoughts and reacting appropriately in an indefinite range of new situations. Humboldt (1836) also talked about the creative aspect of language. For him creativity involves ‘infinity’ and he called language an unending and truly boundless domain. Carter (2004) stated that linguistic creativity is not simply a property of exceptional people but an exceptional property of all people. However, Kumari (1990) defines linguistic creativity as a multi-dimensional attribute that is differently distributed among the people and includes chiefly the factors of fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration.

1.3.7 Developing Linguistic Creativity - A Chief Concern of Language Learning Classroom

‘Creativity is an all-pervasive feature of everyday language. Linguistic creativity is not simply a property of exceptional people but an exceptional property of all people’ (Carter, 2004). Further he talked about the democratization of creativity and claim that creativity in language is not only a property of especially skilled and gifted language users, but is pervasive in routine everyday practice. Language provides continuous opportunity for creativity. A language is somewhat indefinable but has the scope for an enormous number of combinations and options. Although governed by rules, it offers immense scope for originality. Language learning is one of those very open and flexible areas where creative activities can be easily embedded. It is like having different ingredients to cook and being able to combine them differently each time in order to create as succulent a dish as one can manage to. Thus creativity lies in the ability to construct meaningful language from the building-blocks available and to express ideas using the resources available. On another level, creativity also means the scope to play with language and ideas. We transform thoughts into language that we have never heard or seen before. Therefore, language use is a creative act. The ability to use language effectively enhances creativity, breaks cultural stereotypes, and encourages thinking ‘outside the box’. Creative abilities are not likely to develop spontaneously. On the contrary, teachers must take a directive role in initiating and guiding creative abilities of the learners. Language classes are particularly appropriate for teaching creative thinking owing to the richness of material and the interactive approaches used. By means of interactive
approaches and materials, teachers can help students to be aware of their perceptions, assumptions, prejudices, and values and can help students to break old habits to construct a new point of view. It will take effort, but students will enjoy discovering themselves as they learn a language. These are all activities that have real economic value. Creative tasks make classroom work more varied and more enjoyable by tapping in talents, ideas and thoughts for both the learners and the teachers. So, developing linguistic creativity is a chief concern of language learning classroom.

1.3.8 Linguistic Creativity Development through English Classroom – A Thrust Area of Elementary Education

‘Creativity’ is a favorable condition for second/foreign language learning because creativity also implies ‘newness’. The traditional paradigm of education believes in passive reproduction of stereotyped forms. Opposing this conservative, and functional environment where creativity was marginalized, we come to meet concepts such as ‘intercultural being’ and ‘linguaging’ (Carter, 2004) that rely on creativity as a necessary condition for second/foreign language learning.

In recent years, language teachers have focused on the role of the learner as an active participant in the teaching-learning process. This change has highlighted what the learner does and how the learner processes information during the lesson rather than focusing on what the teacher does. For promoting creativity, it becomes important to observe how students produce knowledge rather than how they merely reproduce knowledge. Creativity is not likely to develop spontaneously. So, teachers must take a directive role in initiating and guiding creativity development. Language classes are particularly appropriate for developing creativity owing to the richness of material and the interactive approaches used. By means of interactive approaches and materials, teachers can help students be aware of their perceptions, assumptions, prejudices, and values, and can help students break old habits to construct a new point of view. So, development of linguistic creativity through English learning is an integral part of elementary education.

1.4.0 Enhancing Academic Performance in English Learning - A Significant Objective of Teaching English at Elementary Stage
Academic performance is the outcome of education - the extent to which a student has achieved the educational goals. Enhancing academic performance in English refers to the performance/achievement level of the students in the subject ‘English language’. It is commonly measured by examination or continuous assessment and is usually expressed in terms of percentage or grade or marks.

English language plays a vital role in Indian schools from primary to tertiary level. Besides teaching English as a separate subject, the knowledge of the contents of different school subjects is transferred to the students at all levels of education via English language. It therefore follows that how well students would fare in academic attainment depends largely on their level of proficiency in English language. English, being a second language, many students are poor academic achievers in English in India. We can think of several reasons like students are not motivated/interested to learn English; teaching materials are colorless, unrealistic, dull, uninteresting and irrelevant; classroom teaching methods are lifeless etc. NCF (2005) reports that the goal of school education for English teaching is to prepare students to enter and participate in school with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve at the same high academic level that all students are expected to meet. Beyond any doubt, academic achievement is important for the successful development of young people in the present time. Research has shown that students who do well in school are better able to make the transition into adulthood and to achieve occupational and economic success.

1.4.1 Main Academic Performance Areas of English Learning at Elementary Stage

Academic performance areas of English learning at elementary stage are basically divided into two broad areas i.e. text for detailed study and text for non-detailed study. The area of text for detailed study can further be sub-divided into prose and poetry.
Text for Detailed Study:

Prose is the most typical form of language. It has ordinary grammatical structure and natural flow of speech rather than rhythmic structure.

Poetry is a form of literary art in which language is used for its aesthetic and evocative qualities in addition to, or in lieu of, its apparent meaning. Primarily poetry is governed by idiosyncratic forms and conventions to suggest differential interpretation to words, or to evoke emotive responses.

Text for Non-Detailed Study:

Non-Detailed Study aims to improve the language ability of students. They consist of fairy tales, local legends, everyday stories and scientific stories. The texts are light, reader-friendly and have been made attractive for children with lot of pictures.

1.5.0 Technology Supportive Learning - An Innovative and Practical Approach of Teaching Learning

Technology supportive learning is an innovative and practical approach of teaching learning. It refers to using technology to encourage and facilitate student centered learning activities. Using technology in education is neither a novelty nor is it a fad. It is a part of the modern world, and is becoming more and more ubiquitous in our lives every year. It is also a proven method for improving learning. There is strong evidence pointing towards how it benefits student learning, how it enables those who are not able to perform at their peak in traditional classrooms to do better; how it motivates students to learn and gives them a more positive attitude towards education; how it can individualize learning by giving feedback; how it can act as a catalyst for change towards more student centered learning; and how it better prepares the youth of today with technical, communicative, interpersonal and creative skills. It promotes inventive thinking which induces the development of effective communication leading to teaming, collaboration and interpersonal skills. Moreover, it induces personal, social and civic responsibility, curiosity, creativity and risk taking. The benefits of technology in education have been lauded for many years. Salaberry (2001) remarked that the studies of the effect of technology enhanced instruction on achievement and studies of student attitudes regarding
learning with technology have increasingly been reported. A number of benefits for students related to the general use of technology in classrooms has also been reported. These include increased motivation, improvement in self concept and mastery of basic skills, more student centered learning and engagement in the learning process, and more active processing resulting in higher order thinking skills and better recall (Brownlee-Conyers, 1996; Dwyer, 1996; McGrath, 1998; Weiss, 1994). Additionally, there seems to be a beneficial multi-media effect, especially for low-achieving students, when it is used to illustrate concepts and organize factual information (Nowaczyk, 1998).

1.5.1 Technology Supportive Learning - A Conceptual Framework

Technology supportive learning is focused not on the use of technology but on learning. Educators need to avoid putting technology ahead of learning in their classrooms. In other words, educators should not be technocratic in their thinking. Technologies can help teachers create optimal learning environments in many contents but when planning technology supported learning activities teachers must put learning goals ahead of technology. A more accurate term for using technology in learning might be learning through technology, reflecting the true position of technology in such activity. Teacher designing technology supportive learning lessons should consider these guidelines. However, these guidelines may differ according to not only the course content, but also to other contextual features such as grade level, student proficiency level, and curricular goals.

Few guidelines for taking technology support:

- Use technology to support the pedagogical goals of the class and curriculum.
- Use technology as a tool.
- Use technology effectively.
- Use technology efficiently.

1.5.2 Pedagogical Implications of TSL for Elementary Stage Language Learning Classroom

Technology and language learning have walked hand to hand for a long time. Technology has contributed a lot as a teaching tool especially in the language/
second language classroom. The words ‘enhanced’, ‘assisted’, ‘supported’ in the terms like ‘technology enhanced language learning’, ‘computer assisted language learning’, and ‘technology supported language learning’ indicate that technology only facilitates the language learning process. Many countries have done institutional efforts to modernize their equipment, spent large amounts in technology, proved the positive effects of integrating computers in language learning (Tsou, Wang & Tzeng, 2006). Tengse (2009) stated that various technologies are primarily used for making the language learning simple, effective and an interesting experience for the learner. Besides their essential use in teaching the basic language skills, they provide an effective medium for building the language environment into the classroom. The learners are able to observe and use the target language with the help of these technological aids more effectively. These aids are quite useful in explaining socio-cultural contexts and cultural bound lexical items and concepts in a second language-learning situation. Egbert and Hanson-Smith (1999) stated the following implications of technology supported language-learning classroom:

- Learners have opportunities to interact socially and negotiate meaning
- Learners are involved in authentic tasks.
- Learners interact in the target language with an authentic audience.
- Learners are exposed to and encouraged to produce varied and creative language.
- Learners are guided to attend mindfully to the learning process.
- Learner’s autonomy is supported.
- Learners work in an atmosphere with an ideal stress/anxiety level.

Finocchiaro (1964) stated that the use of special techniques or materials could make the development of language skills a pleasurable activity to which the children look forward with eagerness and enthusiasm. The reasons for using technology supported learning include:

- Experiential learning
- Increased Motivation
- Enhance student performance/achievement
- Authentic material or study
- Greater interaction
Independence from a single source of information
And global understanding

1.5.3 Getting Benefits from TSL for English Language Learning Classroom – Some Discussion

Steep-Greany (2002) stated that the use of technology in English language learning appears to influence the development of linguistic skills. Beauvois (1998) stated that the elimination of strong teacher dominance freed students to express them, resulting in a larger quantity and better quality of communication ability. Beauvois (1994) reported that reading skills had also improved with the use of technology in language classroom. Lunde (1990) reported that students enrolled in a computer-mediated communication project showed improvement in reading comprehension. Furthermore, in follow-up interviews in the Beauvais’s study (1994), many students expressed an increased confidence in speaking. Sanaoui and Lapkin (1992) also found that considerable growth occurred in speaking skills and possibly listening and reading comprehension as well, which implies that an explicit focus on one area can have an effect on the other skills as well. These perceptions of improved listening and reading skills with technology lend support to findings of improved listening skills reported by Glisan (1998). Research has shown us that greater gains accrue when language instruction moves away from the traditional approach of learning definitions of words (the dictionary approach) to an enriched approach, which encourages associations with other word and contexts.

1.5.4 Recognition of the Importance of TSL for the Development of Linguistic Skills, Linguistic Creativity, and Academic Performance in English Learning at Elementary Stage

The benefits of technology supportive learning in education have been lauded for many years. Using technology in English learning/education is neither a novelty nor is it a fad. It is a part of the modern world and is becoming more and more ubiquitous in our lives every year. According to Wang (2005), there are many advantages of integrating technology in classrooms especially for EFL students. Technology helps to improve their language skills, like writing, reading, listening and speaking. He further says that ‘Technology integration in foreign language teaching demonstrates
the shift in educational paradigms from a behavioral to a constructivist learning approach’. Technology facilitates the students’ ability to make personal connections with others and provides opportunities to focus on writing skills without fear of being stigmatized. Even students with mild learning disabilities demonstrate higher level performance and higher level attention to working on multimedia projects than they normally exhibit. Soska (1994) points out that educational technology can help ESL learners develop speaking, reading, and writing skills. Kavaliauskiene & Kaminskiene (2010) stated that the application of educational technology can compensate for the lack of face to face communication with the native speakers and can create wide opportunities to enhance learning. Jayachandran (2007) states that computers make excellent teaching tools, especially in teaching languages in any aspect, be it vocabulary, grammar, composition, pronunciation, or other linguistic and pragmatic communicative skills.

In recent years, use of computers in schools has grown more diversified as educators have recognized the potential of learning ‘with’ technology as a means for enhancing students' reasoning and problem-solving abilities. Kaya and Honey (2005) states that technology plays the essential role to develop learning skills that enable them to think critically, analyze information, communicate, collaborate, and problem-solve in today's knowledge-based society. Reeves (1998), and Ringstaff and Kelley (2002) report that technology as a tool can be applied to achieve a variety of goals in the learning process and can serve as a resource for developing higher order thinking, creativity, and research skills. Ryan (1991) look at various ways in which the applications of technology can support integrated-inquiry-based learning to engage children in exploring, thinking, reading, writing, researching, inventing, problem-solving, and experiencing the world. Research indicates that computer technology can help/support learning and is especially useful in developing the higher-order skills of critical thinking, analysis, and scientific inquiry by engaging students in authentic, complex tasks within collaborative learning contexts (Roschelle, Pea, Hoadley, Gordin and Means, 2000). Simpson (2003) states that by using technology, teachers can develop a teaching format that focuses on a learner-centered environment, stimulates the child’s creativity, and helps them go beyond their immediate experiences and observations. At its best, technology can facilitate deep
exploration and integration of information, high-level thinking, and profound engagement.

Kulik and Kulik (1991), Kulik (1994), Fletcher-Flinn and Gravatt (1995), and Ryan (1991) found evidence of a positive association between use of technology supportive learning and student’s achievement. Boster, Meyer, Roberto, and Inge (2002) examined the integration of standard-based video clips into lessons developed by classroom teacher and found that integration of standard-based video clips into lessons developed by classroom teacher increases student achievement. Wenglinsky (1998) noted that for fourth and eighth graders technology has positive benefits on achievement. Results from other studies (Perez-Prado and Thirunarayanan (2002), Cooper (2005), and Smith, Ferguson, and Caris (2001) also suggest that students can benefit from technology enhanced collaborative learning methods and the interactive learning process. Roschelle, Pea, Hoadley, Gordin, and Means (2000) identify four fundamental characteristics of how technology can enhance both what and how children learn in the classroom: (1) active engagement, (2) participation in groups, (3) frequent interaction and feedback, and (4) connections to real-world contexts. Ferguson (2005), and Goldman, Cole, and Syer (1999) report that new circumstances and opportunities provided by the use of technology can have a direct and meaningful impact on students’ achievement.

1.6.0 Rationale of the Study

The learning of ‘English’ language has occupied a significant place in our school curriculum. As the recognized second language, it (English) has its influence in each and every aspect of our lives and livings. The Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49) observed, “It (English) is a language which is rich in literature - humanistic, scientific and technical. If under sentimental urges we should give up English, we would cut ourselves off from the living stream of ever growing knowledge. Unable to have access to this knowledge, our standard of scholarship would fast deteriorate and our participation in the world movement of thought would become negligible. In fact, it would not be wrong to say that English is a window through which we are able to see the scientific, technological, agricultural, commercial and literary developments taking place to the world”. French (1950) quotes, “Anyone who can read English can keep in touch with the whole world without leaving his own home”.

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The National Policy on Education (1968) also stressed the importance of the study of English language in these words, ‘Special emphasis needs to be laid on the study of English and other international languages. World knowledge is growing at a tremendous pace in science and technology. India must not only keep up this growth, but also make her own contribution to it. For this purpose, the study of English language deserves to be strengthened’. Now English language has become the global language. Mother Tongue or Regional languages have failed to create market value for themselves, whereas only English is able to achieve it. Knowledge of English is seen to be the key to economic prosperity. So, in our country, the study of English language occupies a very significant place in our whole educational system and more specifically at school stage.

The development of fourfold basic linguistic skills (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing) is one of the most fundamental objectives of teaching learning of any language. Stevick (1982) stated that one of the most important tasks of a language teacher is to help student to build up the basic linguistic skills/competencies from which his/her future performance must flow. Palmer (1926) remarked that “the literary aim of teaching English should not be followed at the school stage. This stage is for linguistic aims only. To aim at language is to pave the way to literature. If we aim at literature in the beginning, we shall miss the way for language. Thus, during elementary stage, teaching of English should concentrate upon training in listening, speaking, reading and writing only. School activities and programmes should direct and develop these abilities in their proper order”. Therefore, it is necessary that the Indian pupil should not only understand English when it is spoken or written but also s/he should be able to speak or write it. Our chief concern should not be about the difficulties of pronunciation, growth of vocabulary, grammar and structure but with language abilities (i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing). These four basic linguistic skills are not only important but interrelated. Here proficiency in one leads to proficiency in others. So, in the language learning process, these basic linguistic skills are not to be kept in water tight compartment. Those who offer to study English must be equipped with all the skills to use the language (Kohli, 1989). Chesbro (2000) stated that during school stage, learning activities should focus upon the acquisition of basic linguistic skills. Further he stated
that here are different aspects of communication but fundamentals are speaking, listening, reading and writing. These communication skills are central to our lives and work; provide support for the development of whole person, the improvement of educational enterprise, being a responsible citizen of the world, both socially and culturally and succeeding in ones career in the business world. The U.S. Department of Labor (1991) identified competencies necessary for solid job performance. Among the competencies listed were interpersonal communication skills, listening and speaking. The National Governor's Association (1990) has adopted a national educational goal which included a commitment not only to having students communicating effectively but also to demonstrate an advanced ability to communicate effectively. It further specified that achievement tests must not simply measure minimum competencies, but also higher levels of reading, speaking, writing, reasoning and problem-solving. Chesbro (2000) mentioned that proficiency in communication skills is central to all learning, critically useful to the individual in all areas of life and is a developmental process in which skills acquired early serve as a foundation for subsequent learning actives. So LSRW are the basic linguistic skills that all students must master for academic success. Creativity is that trait of human being which distinguishes him/her from other living beings. Gowan; Demos & Torrance (1967) say that, ‘Of all the powers of man that of creativity seems most unique’. There is some creative urge in all human beings. Different studies (Osborn, 1957; Parnes & Meadow, 1959, 1969; Sullivan & Taylor, 1967; Maltzman, 1960) have shown that creative abilities of the individuals can be enhanced. Sharp (2001) remarked that creativity is increasingly gaining recognition as a human trait that can and should be developed through education. It is viewed as important not only for personal development and fulfillment but also for its contribution to the advancement of society/nation. The recent report from the National Advisory Committee for Creative and Cultural Education (1999) made a number of detailed recommendations designed to support the recognition and development of creativity within the formal and informal education system. The National Curriculum Handbook (QCA, 1999) stated that “the curriculum should enable pupils to think critically, to solve problems and to make a difference for the better. It should give them opportunity to become creative, innovative, enterprising and capable of leadership to equip them for their
future lives as workers and citizens”. The Arts Council of England (2003) stated that “Across the world, countries are reforming their systems of education to prepare young people for the increasingly complex and challenging demands of the 21st Century. In many countries, creativity is being given the priority as never before”. Ofsted (2003) recognized the importance of schools promoting creativity. Henderson (2008) reported the need for developing student’s creative skills for 21st century success. The Creative Partnerships in education (CAPE, 2004) stated that ‘today’s essential life and work skills include innovation, creative thinking, complex problem solving, imagining what future holds and above all the ability to cope with choice, uncertainty and the unknown’. The Partnership for 21st Century stresses the importance of creativity in its guide 21st Century Skills, Education and Competitiveness’ that many of the fastest growing jobs and emerging industries rely on workers creative capacity - the ability to think unconventionally, question the herd, imagine new scenario and produce astonishing work. Therefore, students must learn how to imagine the unimaginable and hone their creative talent (Henderson, 2008). Epstein (1993) remarked that creativity occupies the heart of problem solving, students will always have problems to solve; both in their personal and social lives; if you help them develop creative competencies they will be better equipped for the world (Henderson, 2008). The importance of creativity in the education of child has long been felt by the educationists in our country also. Reports of Education Commission (1964-66), National Policy on Education (1986), Programme of Action (1992) and NCERT Curriculum Framework (1987, 2000 & 2005) have all along emphasized the need to develop in child spontaneity, curiosity, independence in thinking, originality, courage to ask questions, scientific temper and in short creative skills and abilities. Hence, the development of creative talents/abilities should be the chief concern of school education.

The teaching of language and literature at the school stage is the best medium through which the creative abilities of the young children can be enhanced. Craft (2000) stated that language is a medium through which possibility can be explored. By possibility, Craft means creative ability. Craft (2000) further remarked that even with very young children it is possible to encourage experimentation, analysis and the expression of feelings - and that the National Curriculum leaves plenty of room
for so doing. Chomsky (1965) stated that most of what we hear and speak are created rather than recalled from memory. Therefore, the use of language becomes the most common creative art that all humans possess and exhibit as a regular part of their daily lives. Further, he stated that one of the qualities that all languages have in common is their creative aspect. Thus, an essential property of language is that it provides the means for expressing indefinitely many thoughts and reacting appropriately in an indefinite range of new situations. The procedure for language is not simply one where a single phenomenon comes about; it must simultaneously open up the possibility of producing an indefinable host of such phenomena. Humboldt (1836) also talked about the creative aspect of language. For him creativity involves ‘infinity’ and he called language an unending and truly boundless domain. Craft (1999) reported that opportunities for developing creativity do exist, even at the most basic levels of language and literacy. As the child’s skill progresses, the opportunities extend, as their more skillful use of language enables them to both explore other people’s composition and create those of their own. Carter (2004) stated that every language user is linguistically creative is a truism, yet the literature on linguistic creativity is not as extensive as one would expect. Further, he stated that linguistic creativity is not simply a property of exceptional people but an exceptional property of all people. Although it was well understood that linguistic processes are in some sense creative but the technical devices for expressing a system of recursive processes were not simply available until much more recently. In fact, a real understanding of how a language can (in Humboldt’s word) ‘make infinite use of finite means’ has developed only within last thirty years. Attempts are now being made for an explicit formulation of the creative processes of language.

The main objectives of teaching English at our school stage are not limited within the development of fourfold fundamental linguistic skill (i.e. LSRW) and linguistic creativity only. However, one of the most important concerns for teaching English to our school students is to enhance their academic performance in English language learning. Since English has now become the part and parcel of Indian sanskriti and it is taught as the second language, so, it is expected that all our students especially at school level should have better academic performance in English. Academic performance in English refers to performance of students relating to various
competency areas of English language learning like communication competency, vocabulary competency, grammatical competency, comprehension competency etc. Whether we like it or not, English has genuinely become the language of great prestige in our society because of its influence in every aspects of life. But it is found that students have failed to acquire adequate competence in the area of English language as they have a heritage language that is not English and they are not yet proficient in using English. These discussions clearly state that development of academic performance in English should be one of our chief concerns of teaching English at our school stage.

Technology has wide effect on present day teaching learning process. Teaching learning strategies supported by the use of technologies benefit a lot to the learners in learning environments. A number of benefits for students related to the general use of technology in classrooms have been reported (Salaberry, 2001). These include increased motivation, improvement in self-concept and mastery of basic skills, more student centered learning and engagement in the learning process and more active processing, resulting in higher order thinking skills and better recall (Brownlee-Conyers, 1996; McGrath, 1998; Weiss, 1994). Additionally there seems to be a beneficial multimedia effect, especially for low achieving students when it is used to illustrate concepts and organize factual information. Students also appear to gain confidence directing their own learning (Nowaczyk, 1998).

The use of Technology supportive teaching learning strategies in the teaching learning process of English language is highly realized now days. The Sixth Survey of Educational Research (2007) cites that technology oriented strategy is now widely used for English language learning and more specifically at secondary and higher level of education in India. Stepp-Greany (2002) remarked that the use of technology, especially multimedia, for foreign language instruction has expanded rapidly in the United States during the last two decades. Studies of the effect of technology enhanced instruction on achievement and studies of student attitudes regarding learning with technology have also increasingly been reported (Salaberry, 2001). However, most of these studies have examined the use of only one element of technology and those regarding student perception have been largely concerned with the use of computer mediated communication via e-mail or networking.
The use of technology supportive learning for achievement of objectives in the three main domains of language learning i.e. linguistic skills, linguistic creativity and academic performance in the area of language learning has been highly recognized. Its (technology supportive learning) use for the achievement of objectives in these three domains especially of English language learning has also been recognized to a greater extend. Also research findings suggest that development of linguistic skills, linguistic creativity and academic performance in the area of language learning is one of the most fertile areas of research. Warschauer (1996) stated that pedagogy that is supported by the use of electronic technologies as necessary for ESL learners to acquire the linguistic, social and technological knowledge is the key to literacy in a digital world. Stepp-Greany (2002) mentions that use of technology also appear to influence the development of linguistic skills. Kasper (2000) remarked that the use of technology promotes the acquisition of literary skills. Several researches have reported an improvement in student writing skills through the use of networked computers (Beauvois, 1998; Cononetos & Oliva, 1993; Warschauer, (1996). According to Beauvois, students in the networked writing project displayed more fluidity of conversation, more use of complex sentences and more self-disclosure. There have been reports of improvement in reading as well. Lunde (1990) reported that students of Japanese enrolled in a computer-mediated communication project showed improvement in reading comprehension. Beauvois’s study (1994) stated that students expressed an increased confidence in speaking in controlled interactive environment. Further he reported that the increased language use promoted this self-confidence. Sanaoui and Lapkin (1992) also found that considerable growth occurred in French speaking skills and possibly listening and reading comprehension as well. The use of technology in language learning class increases the linguistic creativity in many ways. Berk (1991) stated that children in traditional facts and memory classrooms exhibit less creative behavior than those from non-traditional open classrooms, which offer more choice and hands on experience. Recent researches are looking more toward domain-specific abilities that are fostered and developed through a supportive environment and perhaps through some portion of natural
ability. Mellou (1996) remarked that creativity may be nurtured through educational setting in three respects: the creative environment; creative programs; and creative teachers and ways of teaching. For achieving better academic performance in language learning process, the use of technology can be used as the best learning strategy. The Sixth Educational Survey (2007) mentioned that technology itself became a strategy for enhancing academic performance of the students in the area of English language learning. Parhar (1994) reported positive result of the students learning outcome. The use of multimedia has also proved beneficial for slow learners (Reddy & Ramar, 1997) and as a remedial strategy for overcoming learning disabilities (Bose, 1996). Use of technology increases students motivation as it promotes their active engagement with language and content through authentic, challenging tasks that are inter disciplinary in nature (McGrath, 1998). According to a report published by the United States Department of Education (1995) technology is an important enabler for classes organized around complex, authentic tasks and when used in support of challenging projects, technology can contribute to students since that they are using real tools for real purposes. When students search for information in a hyper linked environment, ESL learners benefit from increased opportunities to process linguistic and content-information. Despite knowing the significance of using technology supportive learning environment, little has been done to assess their impact on student learning outcome (Bryant, Campbell, Kerr; 2005).

From the above discussions, it is clear that the development of linguistic skills, linguistic creativity and academic performance relating to language learning are the main concerns/objectives of any language learning. Referring to learning of English language in our country, these concerns/objectives must be highly realized among our students because English is taught as the second language in our country. From the above discussions, it is clarified that technology supportive learning (learning with the help of different technologies but not limited within the use of computer only) is an innovative/learner-centric approach of teaching learning that has wider implication for achieving learning objectives in different areas of study at the school stage. Further, it is inferred that technology supportive learning has a greater impact on language learning. Many of the above-mentioned research evidences state that technology supportive learning can be used as a best method/medium/strategy for
developing linguistic skills, linguistic creativity, and academic performance relating to any language/English language learning. However, from the above discussions it is found that the development of linguistic skills, linguistic creativity, and academic performance in English learning are not properly cared at our school stage. Therefore, the researcher is keen to see the effect of a new/innovative/learner-centric approach of teaching learning (Technology supportive learning) for development of linguistic skills, linguistic creativity, and academic performance in English learning among elementary school students. Hence, the researcher states the problem in the following way:

1.7.0 Statement of the Problem

On the basis of the above research gaps, the present study is titled as, ‘Development of Linguistic Skills and Creativity in English Learning at Elementary Stage through Technology Supportive Learning: An Experimental Study.

1.8.0 Operational Definition of the Terms Used

Linguistic Skills: Linguistic means the scientific study of a language or connection with language. Linguistic skills refer to different performance or skill-areas connected to language. The acquisition of a language is concerned with development of so many types of skills: like vocabulary-related skills, grammatical skills, listening skills, speaking skills etc. Out of which four skills are most important i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. Every language acquisition/learning emphasizes on development of these four skills to a maximum extent. In the present study, linguistic skills are understood in terms of four skills relating to a language (i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

Linguistic Creativity: Creativity is an ability of an individual that helps him/her to produce new or original ideas. Since it is a psychological construct, so, it has no any clear-cut referent. However, many psychologists and educationists operationally define creativity in terms of divergent thinking mainly characterized by fluency, flexibility and originality. In the present study, linguistic creativity is understood as the divergent thinking characterized by fluency, flexibility and originality relating to learning of language and literature.
**English Learning:** English learning refers to learning of English language. In the present study, English learning refers to the teaching learning of the language subject ‘English’ at class VI stage.

**Elementary Stage:** Elementary stage generally covers class I to class VIII. Present study is confined to class VI of elementary stage.

**Technology Supportive Learning:** Technology, in general, refers to the use of new, innovative, developed and scientific techniques/strategies/methods/materials (both hardware and software) in different sectors of human life for the development of human kind. Technology supportive learning in the present study refers to the practice of teaching learning with the help of different technological devices (both hardware and software) like computer, slide presentation, power point presentation, use of tape recorder, use of models, charts, projectors etc.

**1.9.0 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the present study are:

i. To develop technology supportive learning (TSL) for the development of linguistic skills, linguistic creativity, and academic performance in English learning.

ii. To study the effect of technology supportive learning (TSL) over usual learning method (ULM) for the development of overall linguistic skills, linguistic creativity, and academic performance in English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

iii. To study the effect of TSL over ULM for the development of component-wise linguistic skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), linguistic creativity (fluency, flexibility, and originality) and academic performance (prose, poetry and non-detailed) in English learning with regard to pre-test and post test scores.

iv. To study the effect of TSL over ULM for the development of overall linguistic skills and linguistic creativity in different content areas of English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

v. To study the effect of TSL over ULM for the development of component wise linguistic skills and linguistic creativity in different content areas of English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.
1.10.0 Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses of the present study are:

i. There exists significant difference between mean scores of overall linguistic skills developed through TSL and mean scores of overall linguistic skills developed through ULM in English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

ii. There exists significant difference between mean scores of overall linguistic creativity developed through TSL and mean scores of overall linguistic creativity developed through ULM in English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

iii. There exists significant difference between mean scores of overall academic performance developed through TSL and mean scores of overall academic performance developed through ULM in English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

iv. There exists significant difference between component wise mean scores of linguistic skills developed through TSL and component wise mean scores of linguistic skills developed through ULM in English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

v. There exists significant difference between component wise mean scores of linguistic creativity developed through TSL and component wise mean scores of linguistic creativity developed through ULM in English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

vi. There exists significant difference between component wise mean scores of academic performance developed through TSL and component wise mean scores of academic performance developed through ULM in English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

vii. There exists significant difference between mean scores of overall linguistic skills developed through TSL and mean scores of overall linguistic skills developed through ULM in different content areas of English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

viii. There exists significant difference between mean scores of overall linguistic creativity developed through TSL and mean scores of overall linguistic...
creativity developed through ULM in different content areas of English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

ix. There exists significant difference between component wise mean scores of linguistic skills developed through TSL and component wise mean scores of linguistic skills developed through ULM in different content areas of English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

x. There exists significant difference between component wise mean scores of linguistic creativity developed through TSL and component wise mean scores of linguistic creativity developed through ULM in different content areas of English learning with regard to pre test and post test scores.

1.11.0 Delimitation of the Study

The study is delimited to following points-

i. The study is delimited to the class VI students.

ii. The study is delimited to English medium (CBSE) schools.

iii. The study is delimited to three schools of Malda town of West Bengal.

iv. The study is delimited to co-educational schools.

v. The Study is delimited to the effect of TSL on the development of linguistic skills, linguistic creativity and academic performance of the students.

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