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Review of Related Research
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3.1 **Introduction**

For every researcher it is an important task to study the earlier researches which are closely or bit remotely related to the chosen topic of research. This provides enormous amount of insight, information and inspiration to the researcher. The literature studies for this particular research project are divided into two categories as given below:

I. Researches based on teaching of English language in Indian Schools.

II. Researches based on Synthetic Phonics.

3.2 **Research on English Language teaching in Indian Schools**

1. Aparaj, S.M. 1991. *Conducted study to find out the relationship between micro-listening abilities and listening exercises in teaching English in secondary schools.* \(^{(1)}\)

**Objectives:** i) To investigate learners’ micro-listening abilities and skills, (ii) to devise listening exercises to achieve the above, (iii) to find out the relationship between micro-listening abilities and listening
exercises in teaching English as a second language in secondary schools, (iv) to prepare a listening test of English as a second language for testing the development of micro-listening abilities, and (v) to compare the achievements in listening abilities of the control group and experimental group pupils studying English as second language.

**Major Findings:** (1) The integrative listening skill of the experimental group developed greatly as compared to control group. (2) There was significant positive relationship between the listening language exercise and integrative listening skills of the learner of English as a second language. (3) Each of the 10 language elements separately led to the development of the listening skill. (4) the listening skills of girls developed more quickly than that of boys.


**Objectives:** (1) To investigate the process whereby learning opportunities are created. (ii) to investigate how uptake related to the interactive nature of learning opportunities, (iii) to find out whether uptake of individual learners differs and whether the characteristics of classroom interaction and the nature of learning opportunities can
themselves predict uptake, and (iv) to investigate learners’ perceptions of the relative value of different learning opportunity types.

**Major Findings:** (1) The categories which were supposed to be conducive to uptake were generally found to be so. (2) Adequate treatment generally facilitated uptake while inadequate treatment correlated with poor uptake. (3) Besides quantum, variation and quality of treatment, the source of treatment played a significant role in facilitating uptake. Even if treatment was not adequate enough, a word was likely to be uptaken if a learner introduced it in the discourse. (4) Words that were inherently easy to spell and had easy equivalents in English and/or in the mother tongue of the learner were more easily uptaken and vice versa. (5) Quite often, those who sought clarifications or asked for meanings did not uptake them. (6) Over elaboration and extraneous input tended to mislead or confuse learners and so hindered uptake. (7) Lexical items that had not been satisfactorily treated were less easily retained over time even if these had been uptaken by a large group of learners.


**Objectives:** (i) To standardize a proficiency test in English, (ii) to determine significant differences in mean attainment in English sex-
wise and strata-wise, and (iii) to find out a general factor in different dimensions of the proficiency test in English.

**Major Findings:** (1) The urban students showed better performance in the proficiency test in English as compared to their rural counterparts, and urban girls as against rural girls. (2) Students with high proficiency in vocabulary, spelling, stylistic transformation, derivational structure, applied grammar, and contextual meaning were superior in proficiency in English as compared to their low profile counterparts. (3) However, there were no differences between boys and girls, urban boys and urban girls, as well as rural boys and rural girls.


**Objective:** To find out if phonological awareness determines beginning reading.

**Major Findings:** (1) Boys and girls did not differ on measures of phonological awareness. (2) Boys and girls did not differ significantly on scores relating to their oral reading performance. (3) Phonological awareness contributed to oral reading performance but this was not
found statistically significant. (4) Phonological awareness did not
determine beginning reading.

5. Gaya, Tushar Kanta. (1988). Study of listening ability which
is one of the important objectives of language teaching-learning.

Objectives To describe the nature, skill and training issues related to
listening, which is one of the important objectives of language
teaching-learning.

Major Findings: (1) Listening ability is used to a greater extent than
any other communication ability such as reading, writing and speaking.
(2) There are four levels of listening. The first is mood listening. The
purpose of second level is relaxation, escape, getting one’s mind off
something. The third level seeks answers as a key to action. This form
of listening does not require sustained concentration. The fourth level
of listening is the stage of analytical and critical listening. (3) The
correlation between listening and I.Q. varies from investigation to
investigation. (4) The human mind is capable of processing information
at a faster rate than the human speech organs are capable of
producing speech. (5) Listening skill is a fundamental language skill as
well as a receptive communication skill. (6) Training to listen is
possible. Training increases the ability to listen.
6. Nanda, Kamala. (1982). **A study to find the causes of poor attainment in English in the HSC examinations.**

**Objectives:** (1) To detect causes of poor attainment in English in the HSC examinations. (ii) to detect weak areas of comprehension skills, (iii) to investigate the causes of poor attainment in English particularly in the areas relating to simple comprehension, vocabulary items, structural items, and critical thinking, (iv) to suggest remedial measures for developing power of comprehension, (v) to suggest remedial measures for better teaching and learning processes, and (vi) to recommend remedial measures to be adopted by teaching staff, administrative and controlling authorities of schools.

**Major Findings:** (1) Significant causes thwarting comprehension of pupils according to pupils included, lack of knowledge in structural usage and vocabulary items taught in the previous classes, lack of stronger foundations in elementary reading distraction and careless reading, absence of reading readiness, new vocabulary, lack of reading practice, intelligence and interest, negative attitude to reading, improper handling of complex sentence structures, abstract ideas, unusual word order, and grammatical usages, skipping over the key words. Parrot study from examination point of view, reading by letters
and words, not the sentences as a whole, a dull recognition of words and central ideas, purposeless reading, and lack of proper guidance. (2) Difficulties which hinder effective teaching of comprehension included, lack of teaching aids, library, reading facilities and initiative on the part of teachers, unsuitable textbooks, poor salary structures, over-burdened timetable, and lack of preparation of lessons due to shortage of time. (3) Socio-economic conditions of both teachers and pupils, lack of study atmosphere and favourable environment, apathy of teachers, lack of effective supervision and administrative control and poor financial conditions of schools. (4) Significant causes identified by pupils included, lack of semantic knowledge, expression, knowledge of word usage, phrases, and grammar and careless and hurried reading. (5) On post-test comprehension, the performance of the 123 underachievers, after the remedial teaching programme, improved satisfactorily.


**Objective:** To study the difference in achievement in reading and writing skills of students taught under the conventional method and activity-centered approach to teaching of English.
Major Findings: (1) The activity-centered approach to teaching of English produced an improvement in reading and writing skills. (2) The conventional method of teaching English improved reading and writing skills. (3) There was no significant difference in the achievement of the reading and writing skills between the students taught under activity-centered approach and the conventional method.

3.3 Research Based on Synthetic Phonics:
In recent years the Synthetic Phonics Method is in discussion and debate in many of the European countries. The education department, the local education authorities of the county council regions are conducting studies in this context. In U.S, Australia also number of research studies are undertaken. A few relevant ones are quoted below.

1. Infant School Literacy Project: for bilingual children with the Parental Involvement (8):

Summary –. In East Midlands, U.K. children with English as a second language were noted as having very poor literacy skills. A group of children from different ethnic background were identified to serve as a comparison group. They did not receive phonological awareness training. The training took place on a daily basis over two terms and involved core work from the Phonological Awareness Training package, nursery rhymes and verse, using plastic letters to make words and later group reading from Ginn All Aboard series. The
parents of the 12 children in the treatment group were involved through helping their children make words at home with plastic letters. The aims and methodology of the project were explained to them. The aims of the project were to improve the early literacy skills of a group of bilingual children in Year 2 by raising their phonological awareness of English words, to increase the knowledge of letter sounds amongst this group and to raise the understanding and skills of parents in how to help their children to achieve more age-appropriate literacy skills. Parents were encouraged to make use of verse and song in their first language at home with the children.

Findings: However, language difficulties seemed to have made full parental involvement difficult; some of the target group children reported that they made words up by themselves, or with siblings. Assessment of the children’s phonological awareness, early spelling, reading, and alphabet skills was carried out, along with parental questionnaire. The children showed improvement in their phonological awareness and some in their literacy skills. Some made more progress on alliteration and rhyme tasks but less on reading and writing phonologically regular words. Generally, those adults working with the children felt that they had been helped to make a start on key literacy skills in English and their confidence had improved significantly.
2. **Comparison of Synthetic Phonics Method and Whole Language Method**

**Summary:** This study compared the effects of two methods of beginning reading instruction: a synthetic phonics method (Jolly Phonics) and a whole language method (Big Books) (Stuart, 1999).\(^{(9)}\)

Before instruction began, children were measured on a wide range of abilities, including letter-sound knowledge, so that any pre-existing differences between groups receiving the different forms of instruction could later be taken into account. Children were tested after 12 weeks of instruction, and then tested again, one year later.

**Findings:** The results of this study confirmed the findings of the former study, but there were two further important findings. The majority of the children in this study (86%) were foreign language speakers, learning English as their second language. This study showed that the Jolly Phonics instruction was very effective with such children. Additionally, the results from the delayed tests demonstrated that Jolly Phonics instruction produced effects that were long-lasting.

The valuable contribution made by this was in showing that the superior word reading and spelling skills of the children taught by Jolly Phonics did have an effect on reading comprehension ability as well. When both the reading comprehension and reading accuracy scores
were combined (producing a more reliable overall comprehension score), the phonics-taught children’s comprehension was significantly better than that of the whole language taught children.

3 Accelerating Reading and Spelling with Synthetic Phonics:

Summary: This study conducted in Scotland (Johnston & Watson, 1998) involved 300 primary children. Three different methods of phonics-type instruction were used. i) Synthetic Phonics Method; ii) Analytic Phonics Method; iii) Analytic Phonics programme with phonological awareness. The results from this study were invaluable in answering more detailed questions: What kinds of phonics instruction work best? How useful are different kinds of phonological instruction? How rapid should be the rate of letter-sound teaching? What is the optimal age for comprehension ability?

Findings: Although the spelling achievement of all three groups was well above age level, the children who were taught synthetic phonics right from the start were spelling at a level 12 months above their chronological age, a level that was significantly superior to the other two, relatively well-performing groups.

Moreover, when an examination was made of the proportion of poor readers in each group after the initial 16 weeks of instruction, a further
difference resulting from the early teaching of synthetic phonics was discovered. No children in this group were more than a year below their chronological age in reading. Whereas a number of children in the other two groups did require extra reading tuition in addition to the subsequent synthetic phonics teaching, none of the children in the early synthetic group required special help subsequently. Thus, this study showed that when this synthetic phonics programme was given early, it not only led to better spelling ability, but importantly, it also avoided the need for expensive remediation.

4. **A study to find activities which matter for reading:**

**Summary** - The study in Canada (Sumbler and Willows, 1996)\(^{(11)}\) compared the effects of Jolly Phonics, a synthetic method, with the effects of a whole language method among 265 children attending kindergarten classes in working class neighbourhoods. This study was the first of its kind to adopt an innovative time sampling technique. Over a period of six months, observers closely monitored the amount of time individual pupils in both kinds of classroom spent on ten different activities. Thus, this study not only assessed achievement differences produced by different methods of instruction at the end of this time, but also exactly what aspects of training led to those differences.
**Findings:** It was found that only two activities, both of which comprised explicit letter-sound instruction, were significantly related to subsequent reading and spelling success. The two activities were: ‘phonics’ (which included all phonics activities involving print), and ‘letter formation’ (which involved pronouncing letter-sounds while writing the letter shapes). Surprisingly, these two activities were the only ones that mattered in terms of reading and spelling achievement, and intriguingly, by far the most important activity within the phonics category was the Jolly Phonics sound actions. These results are valuable for two reasons in particular. They show that rather than a type of reading instruction per se, it is the differences in time allocation to various activities that really count. Furthermore, the findings from the time sampling part of the study are powerful in confirming that a child’s level of letter-sound knowledge plays a key role in learning to read. They underline the necessity in reading experiments to make sure that two pre-reading or beginner reading groups are equal at the start of an experiment in terms of their letter-sound knowledge.
5. **Need for systematic synthetic phonics teaching within the early reading curriculum**

An article published in Australian psychologist. Both the New Zealand Ministry of Education’s Literacy Experts Group and the Australian teaching of Literacy have recently acknowledged the centrality of systematic instruction in synthetic phonics to early reading instruction. Basic psychology and evidence-based evaluation studies have supported the inclusion of systematic synthetic phonics instruction within the early reading curriculum, allowing practicing psychologists to develop an informed opinion on this issue.

3.4 **Summary and implication for the study:**

After reviewing studies from surveys and dissertation abstracts the investigator consolidated the thought process. Teaching and learning of English has immense importance throughout India and the world over. It is observed that the research conducted in India for the teaching of English language does not include the first time learners of the language. Hence the researcher felt that research to teach the English language to the first time learners is an unexplored area in Indian context.

The research based on Synthetic Phonics of teaching of English language are seen mainly in Europe, America and Australia. No such study is observed in Indian context. The support of new
technologies made available by ICT is also not observed in the Synthetic Phonics Research. Hence the research study which involves ICT based synthetic phonics method of teaching English for the first time learner is a unique approach. This method should make a substantial difference to the first time learner in the Indian context and especially in Gujarat State which is the chosen area for the study.
Reference

   www.education.nic.in/cd50years/12/81/6U/816U0101.htm

2) Banatwala, Ayesha G. (1989). “Exploring the relationship between classroom interaction and uptake in EFL (English as foreign language) teaching classes in order to provide better learning opportunities.” ibid., Pg. no 743.


   http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/global/default.asp


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