SOCIO-CULTURAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FRAMES OF REFERENCE IN DEVELOPING SECOND LANGUAGE READING SKILLS IN PAKISTAN

By

NIGHAT SULTANA

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES, ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

September 2003
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MODERN LANGUAGES
FACULTY OF ADVANCED INTEGRATED STUDIES AND RESEARCH

THESSES/ DISSERTATION AND DEFENSE APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have read the following thesis, examine the defense, are satisfied with the overall exam performance, and recommend the thesis to the Faculty of Advanced Integrated Studies & Research for acceptance:

Thesis/ Dissertation Title: Socio Cultural and Psychological Frames of Reference in the Development of Second Language Reading Skills in Pakistan

Submitted by: Nighat Sultana
Name of Student

Registration No. 699-Phd/Eng/2006 (A) Doctor of Philosophy
Degree Name in Full

English
Name of Discipline

Dr. Riaz Hassan
Name of Research Supervisor

Signature of Research Supervisor

Dr. Shazra Munnawer
Name of Dean (FAISR)

Signature of Dean (FAISR)

Dr. Aziz Ahmed Khan
Name of Rector

Signature of Rector

Date: 15th August, 2007.
CANDIDATE DECLARATION FORM

I, Nighat Sultana ........................................................................................................

Daughter of S. M. Ashfaq, .........................................................................................

Registration No. 009 - Phd. 1 Eng. 1 2000 (August) ...........................................

Discipline .......... English ............................................................................................

Candidate of Phd. English .................. at National University of Modern Languages do hereby declare that the thesis Social-Cultural and Psychological Frames of Reference in The Development of Second Language Reading Skills in Pakistan submitted by me in partial fulfillment of Ph. D degree in English is my original work, and has not been submitted or published earlier. I also solemnly declare that it shall not, in future, be submitted by me for obtaining any other degree from this or any other university or institution.

I also understand that if evidence of plagiarism is found in my thesis/dissertation at any stage, even after the award of a degree, the work may be cancelled and the degree revoked.

11th Sept, 2003. ........................................................................................................

Date: ..........................................................................................................................

Signature ...................................................................................................................

NIGHAT SULTANA .................................................................................................

Name
ABSTRACT

Second language reading skills are the most important skills to make a person functionally literate to face the challenges of the modern world, whereas Pakistani learners lack functional competency at advance level of second language reading. Basic bottleneck is the ignorance of the factors involved in reading and inappropriate teaching skills. Difficulty in reading relates to the mental faculty of learning, motivation, perception, reasoning and problem solving of learners. Pragmatic factors generated by socio-cultural and situational elements also play a vital role. The research done in the field indicates that there are external as well a internal forces working while second language teaching and learning takes place, therefore, if these factors are ignored while planning lessons the desired results can not be achieved.

Assumptions about psychological processes have always been present in decisions about course content and teaching strategies often without the teacher being aware of them. It is commonly observed that many English language teachers in Pakistan are trained to be ignorant; to rely on the opinions of others instead of their own. There are two major implications for a language teacher, one is related to “teaching skills” and the second to “understanding” the process involved in it. The research done in the field confirms that essential element in literacy instruction is “the teacher” and that literacy is not accomplished through the “external controls” of prescribed programmes. To solve the problem we need to run professional development programs and cultivate the culture of “action research” in our educational institutions by acknowledging and improving the socio-cultural status of teachers.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page No.

THESIS /DISSERTATION AND DEFENSE APPROVAL FORM ....... ii
CANDIDATE DECLARATION FORM ................................ iii
ABSTRACT ................................................................ IV
TABLE OF CONTENTS .................................................. v
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ............................................... viii
DEDICATION ............................................................. ix
DELIMITATION ................................................................ x

Chapter:

— 1. INTRODUCTION .................................................. 1
    Research Question .................................................. 4
    Sub-Questions ....................................................... 7
    Rationale ............................................................. 7
    Aims and Objectives of the Study .............................. 8

— 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK ............................... 25
    Thought and Language ............................................. 29
    The Psycholinguistic Theory ...................................... 34
    Psycholinguistics and Reading ................................... 38
    Reading Comprehension: Cognitive-Based Process ........ 41
    Reading Comprehension: Socio-Cognitive Process ........ 43
    Reading Comprehension As Transactional ................. 43
    Reading Comprehension As Transactional Socio-Psycholinguistic .... 44
    Language and Cognition with Reference to L2 Learners .... 45
    Reading Comprehension as Influenced by Attitude ......... 49
    Reading as A Dynamic Process ............................... 50
    Reading as A Decoding Process ............................... 51
    Duration of Fixation ............................................. 52
    Word Recognition ................................................ 52
    Lexical Features .................................................. 59
    Linguistics and Reading ....................................... 60
    Knowledge and Skills in Reading .............................. 61
    The Purpose of Reading ........................................ 62
    The Style of Reading ............................................. 63
Readability and Reading for Learning........................................ 63
Variables in Reading................................................................... 67
Individual Learning Differences.................................................... 74

- 3 IMPACT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS ON SECOND
  LANGUAGE READING................................................................. 82

Culture: Definition...................................................................... 83
Motivation and Its Impact on Learning......................................... 86
The Integration of Culture in Language Learning......................... 89
Skills of Reading and Language Processing in Second
Situation........................................................................................ 93
Socio-Cultural Approaches to Teaching and Teacher’s Role.............. 97
Socio-Cultural Theory and Second Language Classroom Interaction.. 100
Reading Models........................................................................... 102
Impact of Socio-Cultural Theory on Teaching Reading
In Pakistan.................................................................................... 107
Understanding Action Research for Reading Teachers..................... 109
Reading Teachers – Some Considerations...................................... 114

- 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY......................................................... 123

Survey.......................................................................................... 127
Identification of Data................................................................... 130
Data Collection Tools................................................................. 130
Theoretical Framework and Scheme of Study................................. 132

- 5 DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION.................................. 141

Analysis of the Questionnaire..................................................... 143
Analysis of Interviews ................................................................ 167

- 6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION..................................................... 191

Teaching Through Translation..................................................... 192
Reading Syllabus in Pakistan....................................................... 195
Psycholinguistic Elements......................................................... 200
Difference in English and Urdu Discourse.................................. 203
Importance of English as A Means of Imparting Knowledge........... 204
Integration of Language Skills.................................................... 208
Cognitive Research of Reader..................................................... 217
Study Skills................................................................................... 219

CONCLUDING REMARKS................................................................. 234

WORKS CITED................................................................................ 242
ANNEXURE: A
ANNEXURE: B
ANNEXURE: C
ANNEXURE: D
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher owes a debt of gratitude to Allah for the help. The researcher is grateful to the Rector of the National University of Modern Languages for providing her with an opportunity to work toward the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. She is also grateful to the Head of Department of Advanced Integrated Studies, Dr. Saeeda Asadullah, for her apposite observations and general guidance; to the Head of the Department of English (GS), Dr. Rubina Kamran, for her scholarly insights and positive attitudes; and to her supervisor, Dr. Riaz Hassan, for his sustained encouragement and material help at all points of this protracted exercise. The researcher is also deeply indebted to the help of one of her dearest friend for her guidance and support. Ms. Hafsa Ashfaq and Mr. Sohail A. Sheikh undertook the onerous task of composing, proofing and formatting the work, and for this the researcher can only proffer an elder sister’s special blessings.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the researcher’s parents, who have unfailingly supplied a steady emotional and material base for her educational aspirations, and have always been supportive of her endeavors. Without them nothing would have been achieved at all.
DELIMITATION

Very few teachers or students have an understanding of what efficient reading entails, and there is a tendency to maintain old, inefficient approaches and methods regardless of what is happening elsewhere in the world. The field is extremely wide, straddling age groups from children of 4 or 5 on one side to young adults of 23 or 24 on the other, and diverse approaches to school education will be found in different parts of the country, so that some students are exposed to reading in the second language from the beginning, while others hardly get any worthwhile exposure to it at all, yet are required to undertake advanced studies in English when they enter college. Some people rightly insist that the school (in fact the primary school) and not the college, is where good reading habits and skills should be developed. This may be so, but teachers also have to deal with deficiencies at higher levels. However, it is not possible to survey the whole field in a study of this size, so the researcher has confined her observations to students and teachers at the higher secondary and graduate levels, which form the pivotal point for students newly emerging from the school system to decide which direction their careers will take.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is said that human psyche or mind is made up of the socio-cultural world in which it exists. That is why a lot of research is being done in both the fields that are mind and society. Current language learning research tends to examine psychological change in (asocial) way. The research done in anthropology, sociology, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and education clearly indicates that there are external as well as internal forces working while teaching and learning. If one ignores these factors the desired learning outcomes are not achieved. Socio-cultural factors play a very vital role in any educational plan. It is also observed that while teaching English as a second language these forces have a direct impact on the whole learning process. The reason is that teachers and students work in a social setup with their own psychological implications. The complexity has effected ELT situation in multifarious ways. The field is very broad since it covers a wide range of variables like cognitive development of learners, social and affective variables, teacher’s knowledge and skills of the subject, their social status in the society and motivational level etc. The researcher confronted the problem of reading deficiencies of her learners at higher levels, e.g. they lack the ability of higher order thinking skills and
value judgment. Probing into the matter revealed that the learners are not trained in developing advance reading skills. There are various factors contributing to their unsatisfactory performance, the most important of them is teacher performance that is mainly due to inadequate knowledge base of the process.

The nature of teaching methodology for reading skills involves a complicated teaching process that has been subject of extensive debate since the ancient times starting from the Greek, gradually passing through the Romans to Europeans and the modern time. Today the phenomenon of reading occupies a prominent position in a second language learning situation. What the reading process is and how it should be taught are basic problems that concern every classroom teacher.

It has been generally observed that the intermediate grade teachers consider the secondary school teachers as incompetent for not developing the necessary reading skills needed for intermediate stage, whereas the secondary school teachers blame the elementary school teachers as unprofessional. Likewise, the college professors think themselves as immaculate and become critical of the high school structure and thus the whole system looks blameworthy in its true perspective as far as reading abilities of Pakistani learners are concerned. The simple fact is that all too frequently both parents and teachers fail to realize that learning to read means different things at different levels and that at every level it needs continuous development and practice. It has been observed by the researcher that many inefficient readers enter universities,
colleges and careers, and get exposed for their inefficiency in any kind of work that involves reading.

Reading professionals have known for some time that learning to read is a difficult task at various age and grade levels. Beginning or primary reading is basically the development of techniques in word recognition. At later ages, not only does the mode of such classroom practice shifts from oral to silent reading, but the reading task also tends to become primarily one of acquiring efficiency in obtaining and retaining meaning.

Most people think that they know something about reading one might conclude that making a definition of reading is an easy affair. But a person specially a teacher who happens to work in ‘the area’ instinctively feels that it is a complex process with so many facets that a simple definition cannot adequately cover all of them.

It is rightly believed that enlightened involvement of teachers can do much to improve reading and learning to read in school and life situations. Professional competence in reading utilization and improvement in the upper grades requires more than mere acquaintance with a handful of procedures for improving content or correcting reading habits. In this regard we can highlight some of the characteristics of quality education. Quality education means empowering learners with strategies to relate their learning to their day to day life through active participation in the process of learning. We can say that the ultimate goal of quality education is to enable
learners to perform academically well and to become thoughtful and caring human beings. Reading skills are very important and due to this we as teachers should make our learners proficient enough to cope with the situation and prepare them for the future endeavors.

1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

The thesis is written with a broader goal in mind, it provides a conceptual framework with theories applicable to practical situations. The researcher believes that a grasp of instructional procedures and its appropriate application to school situations is enhanced when rooted in consistent and meaningful theory. The research question addressed in this thesis is as to what socio-cultural and psychological factors affect the development of second language reading skills in Pakistan? Therefore, the researcher has started the thesis with identification of the problem i.e. lower proficiency level in advance reading skills of our Pakistani students. In addition to this the researcher will also discuss that literacy skills already developed in the first language can be transferred to the second language to judge the effect of using the first language to teach reading skills in the second language. A lot of translation is found at all levels in the teaching of English in Pakistan, despite a common proscription, known to all language teachers, on the excessive use of the first language for both the introduction and explication of teaching points.
Here the researcher would like to explain why the title "Socio-cultural and psychological frames of reference in the development of second language skills" was chosen. The term 'socio-cultural and psychological frames of reference' signify the dynamic nature of reading and thus the factors that should be considered while teaching reading in a L2 context. In the process of decoding a piece of writing (a cognitive process) the reader brings his total phenomenal world and schemata, hence the researcher feels that reading cannot be understood without consideration of perceptual, cognitive, linguistic and socio-cultural factors. Physical and mental processes involved in reading are complex and the topic reveals as to how this skill is perceived.

This is in line with Vygotsky's argument that mind and consciousness are central to understanding human growth and learning particularly for the higher mental processes. He envisioned mind and consciousness as developing in specific historic and cultural context and viewed learning as a dynamic social process, characterized by continuous change. It goes without saying that mere content of language is intimately related to culture, for example, a society that has no knowledge of theosophy may not have a name for it; somebody who had never seen or heard of a horse would be compelled to invent or borrow a word for the animal. It has been observed that Pakistani learners always bring their own understanding while comprehending a reading passage. One can quote a number of examples in this regard but we can have one or two here as a reference, for example, owl in our society is considered as a symbol of foolishness, whereas, on the contrary in western world it
is a mark of wisdom. Thus the conceptual development and values as well as the traditions and culture always hinder or help the understanding of a text. Terms in different languages have different histories of usage; therefore they can never be exactly translated into another language. They always have different connotations, associations, different shades of meanings and sometimes different basic meanings. Similarly the conventions in different cultures about how to tell a story or how to make descriptions and explanations are usually very different, even the norms of using language according to a specific situation and as to how respect should be shown in discussions etc.

There are also differences in attitudes about gender and age. There are often different religious commitments and even these things are being considered in science education as well. The research is being conducted in the field of other content areas and the important point made in this regard is that we have to understand the core beliefs and experiences of the culture. Teachers must understand students and their many pathways to learning as deeply as they comprehend subjects and teaching methods. More recent investigations on the efficacy of second language (L2) context have continued to focus on the development of socio-linguistic competence and the influence of socio-cultural factors on learners' understanding and teaching skills. Researchers are also examining the effects of L2 context on lexical and grammatical development.
1.1.1 SUB-QUESTIONS

In pursuit of this, the researcher has developed her thesis on the following lines, her sub-questions are related to:

1. What do we mean by reading skills and what do we understand by the integral-operational reading act and its essential processors?

2. What are the present reading theories that are related and could be utilized in Pakistani context?

In addition, the researcher will look at a presentation of fundamental principles and strategies for effective utilization of reading in institutional settings and provide an overview of approaches and techniques for improving targeted adult reading behavior with the help of psychological and socio-cultural approaches.

1.2 RATIONALE

The rationale for selecting this topic is based on the researcher’s following class-room observations and her experiences as a language teacher:

i. Pakistani students entering intermediate and higher levels are developmentally immature readers. Some are functionally illiterate, while most lack the interpretive power, efficiency and flexibility needed to maximize content learning and performance.
ii. Despite a considerable potential to improve many of them fail to achieve functional competency and reading maturity which are very essential to self-actualization of a learner and the survival of a free, literate society.

iii. The students can make greater progress along the continuum of reading development when provided systematic guidance in the learning and application of upper level reading competency.

iv. Reading teachers, having knowledge and awareness of the physical and psychological processes involved in reading, can play a vital role in developing reading skills.

v. This contribution will be proportionate to the degree that teachers and other personnel concerned understand the nature of higher-level reading processes and can plan more effective programmes with the help of theoretical knowledge presented.

vi. In the Pakistani context it is important to analyze inner (psychological) and outer (socio-cultural) factors that kill the Pakistani teachers’ willingness of professional self improvement.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To investigate the matter in details the researcher initiated her inquiry with exploring and evaluating the processes involved in second language reading. The research done in the field has revealed many facets therefore, the
researchers decided further exploration of the psychological and socio-culture factors. In pursuit of that the thesis starts with the conceptual understanding of what reading entails. The broader goal is: to improve the English language teaching situation in general and teaching of reading skills in particular.

1.3.1 OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate current practices in the teaching of reading at higher levels in Pakistan.

2. To find out the satisfaction level of ELT teachers in Pakistani context.

3. To find out competency level of reading teachers in our country (knowledge and application).

4. To determine psychological and sociological factors effecting reading performance in the second language among advance students in Pakistan with special reference to teacher competence and student response.

In light of the objectives set, the researcher will base her study on the following:

(a) As her primary method, the researcher will base her research on relevant reading material. Some of this material, representing standard contemporary reading theory in applied linguistics, is reviewed in this chapter. Other sources will be critiqued during the course of the study.
(b) In order to get Pakistani perspective on this important skill, the researcher will also rely on her own observations as a teacher and will distribute a questionnaire and conduct interviews among colleagues and reading teachers working in selected educational institutions in Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

(c) Opinions derived from the results of this questionnaire and interviews will be compared to another survey of her own students' reactions and ideas representing the whole country.

Information about mental processes in learning, understanding and producing language and associated interpersonal, socio-cultural and situational processes is directly useful for the design, execution and evaluation of language teaching and for that the appropriate area of study is the psychology of learning. In fact most of the major language teaching methods claim to derive from behavioral, cognitive and humanistic theories of learning. Of course this is not something new; assumptions about psychological processes have always been present in decisions about course materials and teaching strategies, often without the teacher being involved. Psyche or mind constitutes and is constituted of the socio-cultural world in which it exists; the relationship is mutual.

Reading is a decoding and meaning bearing skill. The decoding process serves as a tool for the readers' understanding when he tries to extract meaning from a given text.
David in his book 'Some practical applications of a psycholinguistic model of reading' presents a psycholinguistic viewpoint in contrasting good and poor beginning readers. Good readers, he says, depend more on syntactic and semantic information; minimize the amount of print to speech processing, decoding, phonic, or graphophonemic analysis; vary their attention to graphic cues according to the match between the syntactic-semantic information in the material with the same kinds of information in their heads; need phonics or decoding only when the meaning of the material is very unfamiliar; use the semantic-associable information (ideas around a word or concept) most, the syntactic information somewhat less, and, least of all graphophonemic correspondence.

Pearson also suggests that phonic skill activities should not emphasize these elements alone but should also include elements of syntax and if possible semantic information. In other words, phonic practice should deal with words in meaningful, familiar context. He believes that many retarded readers don't need more phonics drill but a listening-speaking sensory program to build language experience, as in the language experience approach to reading. More about this will be discussed in the chapter on 'Reading theories'.

Difficulty in reading relates to the mental faculty of learning, motivation, perception, concept development, thinking, reasoning and problem solving. The factors that contribute to better comprehension are linguistic competence and acquired reading ability. Linguistic competence is comprised of syntactical, semantic, and phonological
knowledge of the language. Reading ability encompasses word identification, miscue analysis, and contextual clues. Poor comprehension takes place due to lack of intelligent guessing of contextual clues for which Pakistani students have never been trained. It is observed that they lack interpretive powers and critical ability to understand and evaluate the reading text.

A fluent reader is the one who can quickly obtain specific information, grasp main ideas, draw conclusions and inferences, skim, scan, and read between the lines. Readers have to be able to experience the reading of graphic symbols before reading symbols. This helps to initiate the relationship of mutual translatability between these two processes. This is clearly explained in Smith’s book ‘Understanding Reading: a psycholinguistic analysis of reading and learning to read’. The book also helps in the study of reading as a tool for comprehension, meaning and communication and it also helps in prescriptive review about knowledge and comprehension.

Models and strategies for reading were used from the book by K.S. Goodman ‘What’s whole in whole language’. It also helped to increase the awareness of cognitive structure and apprehend the nuances of meaning in deep structures and surface structure.

Smith and Dechant in the book ‘Psychology in teaching reading’ have given some basic comprehension skills that a reader has to learn to become a proficient reader. Pearson and David in ‘Teaching reading comprehension’ believe that comprehension
as a product is not so elusive. In fact it involves measuring the net result of the process.

The noted linguist Leonard Bloomfield was probably the first linguist to concern himself with the application of linguistic findings to the teaching of reading. In 1942, he outlined in the April and May issues of ‘The elementary English review in essence’ which was later expanded and published in 1961, under the title ‘Lets read-A Linguistic Approach’. This approach involves the teaching of reading for beginners through the process of learning.

S. Pit Corder’s book ‘Introducing Applied Linguistics’ is useful in understanding the underlying concepts of applied linguistics and language teaching, especially about those parts of the total language teaching operation in which decisions are made in the light of a knowledge of a nature of human language, how it is learnt and its role in society. It deals with those parts of the operation that are potentially susceptible to some sort of systematization based upon scientifically acquired knowledge. Here the writer describes in one of his chapters of the book that we do not go through the process of learning language, that is, the whole process in its entirety, but sample the incoming data. The bigger the basis of our sampling, the better we are able to predict the structure of the occurrence and act accordingly by going into the next phase of the performance. The writer describes the model of modifying the analytical process by a synthetic process as ‘heuristic’. This means that we often make mistakes in our receptive processing of utterances, and have to ‘back track’ frequently and do a more
complete job of analysis of the incoming data. The heuristic model introduces the
notion of prediction or anticipation, which is found in all cognitive accounts of
perception. This is also applied in developing reading comprehension. A learner
needs data as input for practicing on. It works something like a machine. For the
efficient working of the machine the organization of the input data is of great
importance. But no such organization is possible unless we know something about the
program that controls the machine. This is where the psycholinguistics of language
learning comes in and is relevant to the field of applied linguistics. It can be said that
theories of language learning are theories about the programs that control the
processes inside the machine.

The information about mental processes in learning, understanding and producing
language (and hence reading processes) is directly useful for the design, execution
and evaluation of language teaching. Psychology as a science that tries to get some
answer for teaching based in part on accurate psychological information is less likely
to be a hit-or-miss affair. In fact, most major language teaching methods have claimed
to incorporate insights from whatever psychological theory happened to be dominant
at the time, thus the researcher’s decision to look at the development of L2 reading
skills in a psychological frame of reference.

For many years psycholinguists were thought to study behavior, mainly at a simple
level. Early linguists such as Bloomfield suggested that some cross-fertilization of
ideas between the two areas of study was possible and desirable. However, since the
Second World War, most linguists have been more interested in the complexity of human language as compared to animal communication. The researcher feels that this is something of a side line, interesting, but of no great relevance to the understanding of human communication, whereas psycholinguistics as conceived today holds great significance for the development of theories of the nature of mind, cognitive processes, thinking and language, and genetic endowment and structures that shape our intellectual maturation.

Chomsky claimed that linguistics is indeed a branch of cognitive psychology. Since then this field has been open for a considerable amount of careful investigation into the comprehension, production and acquisition of language.

The book ‘Psychology and Reading’ by Roger Brown highlights some of the research done on reading skills. It has been discussed in his book that the earlier research concentrated on just those psycholinguistic processes that are peculiar to reading: the visual identification of graphemes and the relation of graphemes to sound. Because these processes play no role in the perception and comprehension of spoken language, reading seemed a topic sharply distinct from the rest of psycholinguistics.

Letter recognition and letter sounding loom large in the learning effort of beginning readers, and it is the beginning reader that earlier research had chiefly in mind.
How does the skilled reader operate? The answer could be that he engages in directed, highly selective sampling of visual data; he combines the initial data with knowledge of semantic, syntactic, and within-word orthographic constraints to construct hypotheses as to the meanings of large units; then he samples again. Reading researchers in general linguistics is operating with quite similar conceptions of sentence processing and is similarly engaged in a search for units, structural clues, and heuristics. In ‘Techniques in Applied Linguistics’, J.P.B. Allen and S. Pitt Corder, show how skills in reading are acquired through various stages. The first is recognition of written characters. The second is the stage of structuring and the third one is of interpretation.

Psychology in Foreign Language Teaching’ by Steven H. Mc Donough is based upon the idea that ‘information about mental processes in learning, understanding, and producing language and associated social processes is directly useful for the design, execution and evaluation of language teaching.’ This is discussed in relation to psychology.

The writer has used the results of the work done in empirical or experimental research. In one of the chapters, he discusses reading as constructive process. Here the model of reading that Goodman uses (a psycholinguistic guessing game) is briefly discussed. Goodman claims that the word-by-word, left-to-right reading process is a characteristic of the beginner and an unsuccessful reader – not of the mature reader. Rather, Goodman claims that his miscue analysis research shows that ‘experienced
readers sample the text continuously for cues on which to have interpretations guided by constraints such as prior choices, language knowledge, cognitive style, and strategies they have learned. The reader uses his knowledge of the redundancy of the language code to make informed guesses at the shape, constituent structure, syntax and meaning of the next piece of the text and then checks his guess with the actual text.

Steven is of the view that second language learners do not actually produce semantic miscues, being pre-occupied with lower-level-information, related to letters, shapes, spellings, punctuation, and syntax. The reason could be that they are often not encouraged to sample large enough portions of the text to allow semantic information, that is, ideas about the general meanings of the text. Students who are asked to comprehend each phrase to the fullest before going on to the next usually do not develop a general comprehension of the text. In this regard the researcher has also experienced that Pakistani learners do use different strategies e.g. use of prediction but mostly higher level reading skills like value judgment, interpretation and critical evaluation are not to be found.

The writer also gives an example of an Arabic-speaking girl who used three basic strategies for comprehension i.e. prediction, confirmation, and correction. He also points out some levels of analysis, or stages in the construction process, that is, visual code, word identification, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and function. He defines the levels with the help of an example, that when we read stories we do not simply amass
a long string of equally important pieces of information, but organize them into openings, episodes, flashbacks, resolutions, denouements and so on. Then he suggests some exercises for reading, acknowledging the fact that it is a highly complex process.

‘Language Reading and Learning’ by Asher Cashdan provides information about second language lessons for the teaching of reading. Some of the linguistic views taken in L2 teaching and its current practice is also discussed.

The McGraw Hill Inc., publication entitled ‘Linguistics and the Teaching of Reading’ throws light on one method of teaching reading, the ‘whole-sentence’ method. The opinion voiced here is meaning cannot be derived from the printed page without taking in whole language patterns at the sentence level, because these are the minimal meaning bearing structures of most written communication.

Reading, the patterning of complex behavior’ by Marie M. Clay gives useful information about the reading process, that is, the visual perception of print, the organization of reading behavior etc.

‘Oral Language in Reading’ by James Walden basically talks about the relationship of linguistics with the teaching of reading. The book starts with a statement: ‘courses offered in teacher preparation institutions today do not presume to equip teachers for all the tasks in the teaching of reading’. The writer is of the opinion that teachers must
recognize the immensity of the job if they are to develop an effective and efficient program. He urges that in-service programs must adopt a definite point of view and it must define the role of the teacher of reading. Here he quotes Fries in connection with the reading process and activities to cultivate them: that is, '… the cultivation of a whole array of techniques involved in understanding, thinking, reflecting, imagining, judging, evaluating, analyzing… reasoning, and in making emotional and social judgments.' He presents four stages for the better reading programme those are:

i. Preparing for reading, which includes activities and experiences called reading readiness.

ii. Learning to read very simple materials, which includes author-prepared and pupil-teacher prepared materials.

iii. Promoting rapid progress in mastering basic reading skills

iv. Acquiring more mature reading interests and habits

While discussing the importance of language and thought, the writer gives reference of the Sapir - Whorf hypothesis as the language and the culture of a people constitute a prism through which they view the world. As the light rays are bent and distorted by a prism, so are fundamental experiences of life bent and distorted by language and culture. They are of the view that language does not exist apart from culture, i.e. our social setup, norms and beliefs. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis can be stated in: Structural differences between language systems will in general be paralleled by non-linguistic cognitive differences of an unspecified sort, in the native speakers of the
two languages the structure of any one’s native language strongly influences or fully
determines the world view he or she will acquire while learning the language. One
obvious way in which languages may differ is in the nature of their vocabulary. The
most commonly quoted example is that of the number of Eskimo words for ‘snow’.
Eskimo have four different words for snow where English has just one. For example,
‘aput’ for snow on the ground, ‘qana’ for falling snow, ‘piqsirpag’ for drifting snow,
‘qimuquq’ for a snow drift. If you take this hypothesis along, one can say that the
difference in vocabulary is an evidence for a difference in attitude or perception.

The point seems to be relevant, because the researcher has also experienced that
mostly English language learners in Pakistan fail to understand foreign elements in a
reading passage. For example, the term sunshine reveals the sense of cheerfulness in
western culture but when presented to a Pakistani learner, he does not comprehend it
because his conceptual development is based upon his own cultural connotation of the
term. Similarly with the names denoting personal relationship as there are specific
names for maternal and paternal relationship in Urdu but a common name in English.

Developing Reading Skills’ by Francoise Grellet is based on developing reading skills
with the help of varieties of activities. This book is meant for teachers and material
developers and it starts with the explanation of what reading comprehension is. The
book, as put in the writer’s words, ‘attempts to describe and classify various types of
reading comprehension exercises’. It is not a textbook for students or a general
handbook on reading. The exercises provided in the book are cited as examples and
are illustrations of different exercise types.’ A teacher can take help from the principle underlying each exercise.

Frank Smith’s book ‘Understanding Reading’ reveals the point that little of substance has changed since 1971. The main controversies persist regarding what it means to be a reader, how written words are recognized and how reading should be taught. The basic theoretical positions are virtually unchanged today from what they were three decades ago. This statement is probably equally true of other areas of linguistics in that no large basic theory has come forward since Chomsky made his observations in the late nineteen fifties through the sixties and seventies. Studies since then have had more to do with details than with general principles. But a review of recent Second Language Acquisition (SLA) journals shows heated debate between cognitive and social theories of SLA, and perhaps more importantly, attention concerning what constitutes productive research within the field. In a special issue of the TESOL Quarterly focused on theory building, Long (1990) stated the need for theory culling within SLA. Firth and Wagner argue that an emphasis on individual cognition within SLA fails to account for a large number of socio-linguistic and communicative dimensions of language use, including the roles of context, discourse and interaction. It could be said that psychological and cognitively oriented approaches to SLA represent only one dimension of the complex act. What is required is that all the components and their interrelationships need to be grouped together under the label of SLA. In the L2 development process, socio-cultural theory is participating in newer genres of SLA research. Representing a variety of research perspectives, one

Keeping in view the above discussion the aim of the researcher is to shed light on fundamental aspects of the complex human act of reading – linguistic, physiological, psychological and social – and as to what is involved in learning to read. Smith categorically states that his early researches persuaded him that learning to read resulted from practical and meaningful instructions between teachers and students, rather than from exercises and drills. He claims that it has been confirmed by a subsequent experience with many hundreds of teachers, real classroom situations and the research of a growing band of ‘ethnographic’ researches, that the essential element in literacy instruction is the teacher. He also claims that literacy is not accomplished merely through the external controls of prescribed programs and formalized tests, but through sensitive teachers who understand what they teach and who also understand the condition of students whose learning they are responsible for.

It has been said that reading cannot be understood without consideration of perceptual, cognitive, linguistic and social factors. Reading is at least as complex as walking, talking and trying to make sense of the world in general. It should be understood that what is difficult to describe is not necessarily difficult to learn.
In recent years, many linguists have become concerned with the application of basic insights from their science to the teaching of English as a foreign language and to the teaching of language skills to native speakers of English. Therefore, we can conclude that a teacher not only should thoroughly master and understand the reading process, but h/she must also be prepared to interpret this process to each and every pupil attempting to adapt the process.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The chapter in hand provides key insights into contemporary research and knowledge of Second Language Learning in general and reading skills in particular. The exploitation of this knowledge in classroom teaching is the objective since this will give valuable insights into what entails reading process and how L2 reading should be perceived. What are the psychological and socio-cultural aspects that are directly linked with teaching of L2 reading? It is believed that enterprise of teaching and learning is deeply influenced by 'Culture' in a variety of ways. The Institutions, the teachers and students form a trio whereby influencing the learning outcomes.

To provide broad coverage of current thinking and research on major issues addressed in the thesis, this part will highlight the theories and approaches in reading skills which are linked with psychological processes along with the socio-cultural theories, contextual learning as well as different reading modes and the third part focuses on the teachers' role as to how they could improve professionally through Action
Research emerging as teacher researchers. In a nutshell, the researcher has started with theoretical knowledge as a rationale for developing a debate as to how teacher development can foster reading programmes in Pakistani context.

The field of ‘Bilingualism’ and ESL Classrooms has expanded dramatically and the research knowledge has emerged with different theories of L2 learning. This part of the chapter will take comprehensive look at the research done in the field. The subject matter presented here could be used to update teachers on the extensive research base and its implications for practice.

It is a common observation that there is a wide gap between research and pedagogy as a result there is a conflict between goals and knowledge; Zahoric (1986)\textsuperscript{2}, cited in Freeman & Richards (1993) has described a number of ways teaching can be conceptualized. One is the models based on empirical research. In fact, there are different teaching models based on the output of different researchers. Mostly, teachers feel that the research is not to be considered while planning their teaching. Bolitho (1991:25)\textsuperscript{3} is of the opinion that teachers often take up extreme positions, often deferring blindly to theory or rejecting it outrightly as irrelevant to classroom issues. In Pakistan, we are facing problems in teaching English because the output of the teaching practices is not up to the mark, e.g. our learners lack interpretative and analytical abilities while reading a text in English. What can be done about all this? One answer could be to bring the teachers closer to the research based teaching and find ways to familiarizing teachers with the technical knowledge obtained from
research and make it meaningful to them. Other option is to encourage them to become researchers themselves.

Local teachers usually understand their teaching and learning needs within their own context and can find solutions to them much better than anybody coming from a different place. They can understand the underlying social causes of problems and also know what needs to be done about them. This brings us to Action Research paradigm. Carr and Kemmis (1986) refer to this kind of research as practical Action Research.

Teachers' research in their own classes is well established in education. Action Research is intended to improve classroom practice and it also serves as a means to help teachers make their own decisions in planning and implementing them. Teachers are required to follow the steps of doing Action Research to construct and reconstruct classroom lesson plans and become a 'Reflective Practitioners'. They are supposed to not only understand local problems but probe into the matter critically and find solutions for that. Teachers need to become aware of their roles as 'Reflective Practitioners' for improvement of the situation.

According to Carr and Kemmis (1986), Action Research provides a basis for developing truly educational theories through theorizing about practice. The important point to be considered here is that classroom research conducted by researchers, however, is not enough for the practical purposes. Teachers own research
should be based on some theory, i.e. a theory formulated by ordinary research. Widowson (1990) sees 'the need for teachers to be engaged in the active process of experimenting in their classrooms as a way of determining the practical effect of idea in action.

Widowson (1993) has also pointed out that action research cannot take place without theorizing. In pursuit of that teachers need to be familiar with second language acquisition so that they can investigate the matter with the help of theories already formulated. As it is already mentioned that teacher's research is focused on problems identified by teachers in their own context. In the process the teachers reflect on their own practice and it helps them in developing theories which are useful and meaningful for their own learners, for doing that teachers need to engage in the process of conceptual evaluation in order to identify research problem. It is imperative that ELT teachers study the processes involved in second language acquisition. To begin with we can start discussing and exploring some integral processes involved in developing second language reading skills and some practical techniques to teach reading to second language learners.

Let's first of all deal with the psycholinguistic processes in reading and its impact on comprehension. Reading is one of the most important language skills and needs to be studied in relation to language as the primary purpose of language is communication of thoughts and ideas.
2.1 THOUGHT AND LANGUAGE

The relationship between language and thought is essentially what was advocated by Locke (1952)\(^5\) some three centuries ago. According to him, 'thought is independent of language which is dependent on thought and that the function of language is to provide a means for the expression or communication of thought'. Perceptual stimuli like objects or events are related to the thought system. Thus, language and perceptual stimuli bring us to a thought system and ultimately to a language system. The thought system in the mind of the child develops over time as he continues to receive stimuli inputs from the world through concrete things, the sounds and symbols, events and happenings which are a part of our experiences that continues to be so throughout life.

Until thought is sufficiently developed e.g. ideas of objects, relations of objects and the events, the concepts cannot be understood until child understands the meaning of them. When that happens and when language input is experienced in coordination with objects, events and situations, then language learning process starts with the passage of time that results in formation of meaningful vocabulary and grammatical rules.

Mostly, critics believe that a language can not occur without thought. The language system is actually part of the thought system for the meaning and semantics of the language system are those ideas that are part of the content of thought. It is
understood that an idea remains abstract without a word representing that abstraction, for example it is not possible to have one idea for a cow in a language and another for the same animal in thought, nevertheless, we can say that thought and language systems are joined through meanings and ideas. The words 'market, shopping mall, shopping centre etc. give us one concept and one understanding but connotation could differ.

There are two basic functions of the language system that have been constructed by the thought system. The First basic function consists of physical speech sound as an out put and a particular thought as an input. This process is called as physical speech process. The second basic function is to provide a particular thought as output (in the mind), given speech sounds as inputs. This is the process of speech understanding. According to the above conception, language is a system in the mind, which relates mental thought to acoustic (physical) speech. Thus, two different kinds of stuff, mental and physical, are brought into a relationship through the language system. It is the phonological and phonetic aspects of the language system (the sound aspect) that operate through the body for the purpose of causing speech to be produced through the mouth and causing speech to be understood through the ear. Thus, it is the thought that determines the selection of word forms. When as a child we first develop an understanding of a thing and then start using sounds for that. Because we discover that in order to interact effectively with people, we must be instantly ready to express our thoughts through speech, we consequently develop a habit of converting thoughts into language at the mental level. Therefore, it is understood that the connections
from particular thoughts to mental language and then physical speech are automatic and that it is only with conscious effort (our normal condition) that we do not say every thing that we think.

It is generally understood that thought is one way or the other dependent on language. The relationship of language and thought has mainly been formulated and expressed in recent times in its various aspects of speech, thought and the language system. Speech production behavior is fundamental for thought; hence, language is a primary source of expressing it. The language used by a particular community depicts its view of nature and life and it provides specifics of one's culture. To understand a foreign language one has to understand culture of the speakers of that language, thus for success learner it is important that he understands the culture of target language.

The general notion of thought is one whose essentials have been shared with mentalist philosophers throughout the centuries, e.g. Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Locke, and Kant. All these philosophers have disagreed on certain issues but they all have agreed on the existence of mind and thought and its influence on reading behavior.

As discussed earlier, there are a few notions concerning thought, language and speech that are important in understanding the relationship between them. Typically, such theories are held by behaviorists e.g. John B. Watson (1970)6, B.F. Skinner (1957)7, Leonard Bloomfield (1961)8 and Ryle (1949)9. Speech production or other behavior is the basis of thought. The contemporary proponents of this view hold that thought is a
kind of behavior, mainly speech. These psychologists believe that thought or cognition is observable, they reject any notion that affirms the existence of mental process and its relevance to behavior and its causes. They advocate the motor theory of speech perception — the theory that the understanding of speech requires a prior motor act of some sort, e.g. sub-vocal speech or internal articulation. The following quotation characterizes the view in question:

The simplest and most satisfactory view is that thought is simply behavior-verbal or non-verbal, covert or overt. It is not some mysterious process responsible for behavior but the very behavior itself in all the complexity of its controlling relations, with respect to both man the behavior, and the environment in which he lives. (Ryle 1949:449)

As discussed above it is believed that language is the fundamental basis of thought. Many theorists, such as Vygotsky (1962:125,153), Sapir (1929), and Whorf (1964) hold that the language system, with its rules or vocabulary, forms thought or is necessary for thought. For example, Vygotsky states that:

Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them...The relation between thought and word is a living process: thought is born through words. Whorf (1964:125,153)

One could refute that idea as well. One of the examples given in this regard is American-Indian tongues in which noun and verb categories are missing. This also gives us an idea of the relationship between language and thought. Similarly in some
languages the colors gray and brown are called by the 'same name'. This realization led Whorf (1964: 212,213) to reject the usual view of the relationship between language and thought. He suggested that each language has a specific worldview. It is suggested that the speakers of a language are partners to an agreement to see and think of the world in a certain way – not the only possible way. The world can be structured in many ways, and it influences our language as well. In this regard we could refer to different languages and their vocabulary use. Everyone knows it is almost impossible to translate one language into another to its true sense that the speaker wants to express in certain language. It is said that language is not a cloak following the contours of thought. It is a mould into which infant minds are poured. Whorf thus believes that (a) the world is differently experienced and conceived in different linguistic communities and (b) language is causally related to these psychological differences. For example in Pakistan, we have the words like izzat or be-izzati which have their own implications in our culture. So many concepts are related to these two words which are not found in other languages because of the cultural differences.

So, we do come to the conclusion as Whorf has suggested that the world is differently experienced and conceived in different linguistic communities. The evidence presented in support of this claim is entirely related to language. We can easily judge this on the basis of lexical features of language.
Benjamin Whorf (1964), in his paper puts it in these words:

The background linguistic system (in other words, the grammar) of each language is not merely a reproducing instrument for voicing ideas but rather is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade. Formulation of ideas is not an independent process, strictly rational in the old sense, but is part of a particular grammar, and differs, invariably between different grammars. We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native language. It can be noted that Vygotsky differs from Whorf in that he does not make language the ultimate source of meaning. Rather, Vygotsky sees meaning (thought) as arising from an interaction between language and environment. The environment is not considered to be an independent source of meaning, however. To quote examples from our own culture in one of the areas of Potohar, people call blue-dhana instead of using the word green for the color.

2.2 THE PSYCHOLINGUISTIC THEORY

The receptive skill of reading in ELT directly relates to the phenomenon of language that comes within the scope of psycholinguistics as 'information' is encoded by the writer and later on decoded by the reader with the help of brain power. According to Hassan (2002:2):

It has been established that language activity is concentrated primarily in two parts of the brain located in the left cerebral hemisphere. Other than it's primary ability to organize myriads of sense impressions into coherent perceptions, it possesses fast scanning and selecting mechanisms and seems to be able to talk to itself, dip into its own resources, transfer functions from one area to another, test new data against old, judge the truth, falsity or utility of things, solve problems,
develop concepts and insights, look both outside and inside itself simultaneously, work with abstract ideas, analyze and synthesize things and create new forms practically out of thin air. A lot of what it does is through language, or through some kind of proto-language, reinforcing our belief that language is the primary tool for many of its operations.\textsuperscript{17}

What language expresses in general sense? Or what is the most important aspect of communication? These are some of the questions which are directly linked with psycholinguistics. Our language helps us to not only talk about different events of the present, past or future but also enables to scan treasure of knowledge and information. This clearly indicates that some of the imaginative things are also depicted through language. It is a quality of human language that it expresses imagination e.g. the fictional world, fairy tales etc. Representations of such worlds can be created by analogy with those of the real world. A mental representation of a fictional world is similar in form to one of the real world. The difference lies in whether the representation corresponds to how things really are. We express and communicate with the help of our understanding of the world. This is what we call mental representation or schemata.

Schema Theory can be defined in terms of a theory that states that all knowledge is organized into units; within these units of knowledge, or schemata, is stored information. A ‘schema’ then is a generalized description or a conceptual system for understanding knowledge – how knowledge is represented and how it is used.
Linguists, cognitive psychologists, and psycholinguists have used the concept of schema to understand the interaction of key factors affecting the comprehension process. The term itself is not new, but the recognition of its importance to reading is more recent (D.E. Rumelhart 1994)\textsuperscript{18}

Simply put, schema theory states that all knowledge is organized into units. Within these units of knowledge, or schemata, is stored information. A schema, then, is a generalized description or a conceptual system for understanding knowledge - how knowledge is represented and how it is used. According to this theory, schemata represent knowledge about concepts, objects and the relationships they have with other objects, situations, events, sequences of events, actions, and sequences of actions. A simple example is to think of your schema for camel. Within that schema, most likely the knowledge about camel in general, (four legs, teeth color, tail, used for transportation) and probably information about specific camels (different kinds etc). It also includes every kind of information about camel e.g. it is found in specific areas, can survive without water for sometime, etc, can be a part of one’s schema, and every kind of knowledge goes with the development of a schema. Each new experience incorporates more information into one’s schema. In our society the word shaadi triggers off all the things related to the concept – mayoon, mehndi, food, shaadi hall, bride, groom, family relations etc.

How can the link be made of all this with reading process and reading comprehension? As it is already said, that individuals have schemata for everything.
Long before students come to school, they develop schemata (units of knowledge) about every thing they experience. Schemata become theories about reality. These theories not only affect the way information is interpreted thus affecting comprehension, but also continue to change as 'new information is received. As stated by Rumelhart:

Schemata can represent knowledge at all levels – from ideologies and cultural truths to knowledge about the meaning of a particular word, to knowledge about what patterns of excitations are associated with what letters of the alphabet. We have schemata to represent all levels of our experience, at all levels of abstraction. Finally, our schemata are our knowledge. All our generic knowledge is embedded in schemata.¹⁹

The importance of schema theory to reading comprehension also lies in how the reader uses schemata. This issue has not been resolved by research, although investigators agree that some mechanism activates just those schemata most relevant to the reader's task. While theories try to explain the comprehension process, related models have been developed that 'serve as metaphors to explain and represent the theory'²⁰.

Currently, five categories of models have been derived to explain literary processes. These five classifications are termed: Cognitive based, socio-cognitive, transactional, transactional-socio psycholinguistic, and attitude influence.

The language always works in a context. Examples of appropriate responses are that a description should be added to an internal representation of the world, and that a question to which the answer is either 'yes' or 'no' should initiate a search through
such a representation to see if the face that is questioned is true. There are many uses of language and some of them do not require mental representation of the world but the understanding of the socio-cultural factors of the community. The language understanding system extracts the context of incoming sentences, and constructs a representation of the situation to which they refer. It further determines the point of what is being said, so that intended message can be computed and an appropriate response formulated. The content extracted from a sentence or a set of sentences is known as the ‘mental model’ of the situation that the sentences are about. In different cultures the response for a question can be a different one. When we analyze the psycholinguistics as a scientific discipline we try to find out: first, how words are recognized, second, how the structure of a sentence is determined; third, how its meaning is computed; fourth, how its meaning is integrated with what has gone before, and fifth, how the internal message is worked out. To understand that one needs to understand the whole process involved since psycholinguistics is directly linked with reading process.

2.3 PSYCHOLINGUISTICS AND READING

Ahuja describe the relationship of reading in psycholinguistics in a comprehensive manner. The following lines describe the view in question:

A mature reader always engages in the following activities when he reads:

i. He looks at the printed words and he comprehends meanings.

ii. He reacts to the meaning he has developed and he uses some of the
meanings according to his perception.

iii. His perception is based on his own view of the world he lives in.

In view of the above we can conclude that there is a close link that exists between the reader’s competency level in language and his perception, therefore, as mentioned earlier reading is essentially a thought process. As early as in 1917 Thorndike highlighted the notion that reading is not possible without thought. Reading process is getting meanings from word symbols. It is not merely a mechanical process, but mechanics constitute an integral part of the process. While going through the literature on reading, the researcher came across many different statements such as: Reading is primarily a visual task; reading is recognition of words; reading is reproducing; reading is a thinking process; reading is a step to personal development; and the like. Keeping these in view, Strang(1961) and associates rightly remarked:

If we think of reading primarily as a visual task, we will be concerned with the correction of visual defects and the provision of legible reading materials. If we think of reading as word recognition, we will drill on the basic sight vocabulary and word recognition skills. If we think of reading as merely reproducing, we will direct the student’s attention to the literal meaning of the passage and check his comprehension of it. If we think of reading as a thinking process, we shall be concerned with the reader’s skills in making interpretation and generalizations in drawing inferences and conclusions. If we think of reading as contributing to personal development and effecting desirable personality changes, we will provide our students with reading material that meet their needs or have some application to their lives.21
As it has been discussed earlier, reading processes range from the simplest decoding of words to interpretative extended versions. It is done beyond an author's message mainly because of the experiential background of the reader.

It is observed that a reader decodes a printed text into speech and then later critically evaluates the text which is considered as a higher level reading skill. It is revealed that reading in fact does not entail a single ability rather it combines in itself many small parts which if put together can be taken as reading skill. In reality reading is a combination of word recognition skills, vocabulary, reading for total meaning, reading for central thought, comprehending specific factual information, following specific information. Factually, no one reads at one time for total meaning, at another time for vocabulary and still at another time for comprehending a specific piece of information. All these skills play their role simultaneously - may be, the extent of their participation varies according to the different subject matter and objectives related to the task by the reader.

Keeping in view the complexity of the reading process, we can very safely conclude that reading is a visual and mental activity. Reading involves both the acquisition of meanings intended by the writer and the reader's own input in the form of interpretation, evaluation as well as reflection about these meanings.

In the past there has been more stress on the external aspects of reading-perception, e.g. eye movements, letter recognition, pronunciation, letter-name knowledge, etc. -
at the cost of neglecting the internal processes. One of the main problems teachers encounter while taking a reading classes is lack of internal conceptual and reasoning processes of a learner. There is a great tendency of taking reading at a superficial level in Pakistan. Since the teachers are unaware of the phenomenon, they do not care for that. In the following paragraphs some suggested reading models are discussed to help the reading teachers in developing their teaching plans in Pakistani context.

2.4 **READING COMPREHENSION: COGNITIVE-BASED PROCESS**

There are a number of models based on cognitive processing. Researchers emphasize internal aspects of attention as crucial to comprehension. Samuels defines three characteristics of internal attention. The first ‘alertness’ is the reader’s active attempt to access relevant schemata involving letter sound relationships, syntactic knowledge, and word meanings. The second characteristic is selectivity; it refers to the reader’s ability to attend selectively to only that information requiring processing. The third characteristic, limited capacity refers to the fact that our human brain has a limited amount of cognitive energy available for use in processing information. In other words, if a reader’s cognitive energy is focused on decoding and attention cannot be directed at integrating, relating, and combining the meanings of the words decoded, then comprehension will suffer, comprehension difficulties occur when the reader
cannot rapidly and automatically access the concepts and knowledge stored in the schemata.

One other example of a cognitive-based model is Rumelhart’s Interactive model. Information from several knowledge sources (schemata for letter-sound relationships, word meanings, syntactic relationships, event sequences, and so on and so forth) are considered simultaneously. The implication is that when information from one source, such as word recognition, is deficient, the reader will rely on information from another source, e.g. contextual clues or previous experience. The latter kind of processing is termed as interactive – compensatory because the reader (any reader) compensates for deficiencies in one or more of the knowledge sources by using information from remaining knowledge sources. Those sources that are more concerned with concepts and semantic relationships are termed higher-level-stimuli; sources dealing with the print itself that are phonics sight words, and other word attack skills, are termed lower-level stimuli. The interactive compensatory model implies that the reader will rely on higher-level processes when lower-level processes are inadequate, and vice versa. Stanovich(1980:32-71)\textsuperscript{22} extensively reviews research demonstrating such compensation in both good and poor readers.
2.5 READING COMPREHENSION: SOCIO-COGNITIVE PROCESS

Reading comprehension is a socio cognitive processing. A socio cognitive processing model takes a constructivist view of reading comprehension; that is the reader, the text, the teacher, and the classroom community is all involved in the construction of meaning. Ruddell & Ruddell states that:

The role of the classroom’s social context and the influence of the teacher on the reader’s meaning negotiation and construction are central to this model; as it explores the notion that participants in literacy events form and re-form meanings in a hermeneutic (interpretation) circle.\textsuperscript{23}

In other words this model views comprehension as a process that involves meaning negotiation among text, readers, teachers and other members of the classroom community. Socio cultural settings are all brought to the negotiation task. Here the teacher is required to guide the students and use teaching/learning strategies and should also be knowledgeable about the world.

2.6 READING COMPREHENSION AS TRANSACTIONAL

This model takes into account the dynamic nature of language and both aesthetic and cognitive aspects of reading. According to Rosenblatt(1994:1063):

Every reading act is an event, or a transaction involving a particular reader and a particular pattern of signs, a text and occurring at a particular time in a particular context. Instead of two fixed entities acting on one another, the reader and the text are two aspects of a total dynamic situation. The ‘meaning’ does not reside ready-made ‘in’ the
text or 'in' the reader but happens or comes into being during the transaction between reader and text.24

Therefore, written language is only printed material without any meanings unless a reader interacts with it and gives it a meaning. Meanings only take place when a reader transacts with the text. In this model schemata are interpreted as active only when the comprehension is in progress between text and the reader, thus it is a dynamic process that is developing and ever changing. As readers transact with text they are changed or transformed, as is the text. Similarly 'the same text takes on different meanings in transactions with different readers or even with the same reader in different contexts or time.'

2.7 READING COMPREHENSION AS TRANSACTIONAL - SOCIO PSYCHOLINGUISTIC

It is based on Rosenblatt's transactional model. Goodman(1994:1093-1130) conceptualizes literacy processing as including reading, writing and written texts. He states:

Texts are constructed by authors to be comprehended by readers. The meaning is in the authors and the reader. The text has a potential to evoke meaning but has no meaning in itself; meaning is not a characteristic of texts. This does not mean the characteristics of the text are unimportant or that either writer or reader is independent of them. How well the writer constructs the text and how well the reader reconstructs it and constructs meaning will influence comprehension. But meaning does not pass between writer and reader. Characteristics of writer, text, and reader will all influence the resulting meaning.25

The reader has a very active role in a transactional-socio psycholinguistic view. The meaning is the result of interaction between the reader and the text and its
characteristics. These include physical characteristics such as orthography – the alphabetic system, spelling, punctuation, format characteristics such as grouping, lists, schedules, bibliographies; telephone books, recipe books, newspaper and letter; and wording of texts such as the differences found in narrative and expository text. Here, Readers’ schemata are changed as new ways of organizing text to express meaning are developed. According to Goodman:

How well the writer knows the audience and has built the text to suit that audience makes a major difference in text predictability and comprehension. However, since comprehension results from reader-text transactions, what the reader knows who the reader is, what values guide the reader and what purposes or interests the reader has will play vital roles in the reading process. It follows that what is comprehended from a given text varies among readers. Meaning is ultimately created by each reader.26

2.8 LANGUAGE AND COGNITION WITH REFERENCE TO L2 LEARNERS

A Bilingualism is usually described with reference to the linguistic abilities of a person. Perhaps the most liberal definition of the bilingualism is ‘speaker of one language who can speak in another language.’ The definition fits the person who speaks two languages equally fluently. It would also fit the person who has finished less than a single term of study of a second or foreign language. Conversely, the person who is able to read another language fluently with native-like comprehension may not have learned to produce meaningful utterances in that language. One definition says that ‘a person with native-like control of two languages’. As it is said that: the regular use of two languages implies a system-or-two of rules for interpreting
and possibly producing utterances in both languages. A mechanism for deciding which language is being heard must also be a necessary component of the comprehension system.

2.7.1 COGNITIVE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LINGUISTIC COMMUNITIES

Reading cannot be separated from other facets of language acquisition. We can start with the fact that some languages have words for which other languages have no equivalents, a fact that challenges the view that languages are simply alternative codes for expressing some universal set of conceptions. It seems rather to be possible that languages represent quite distinct world views, the example that quoted quite often is the usage of pronouns in different languages. It is observed that there are different pronouns of address, as it can be seen that all the major European languages have two forms of address where English has only one. Whereas the French may say ‘tu’ or ‘vous’, the German ‘du’ or ‘sie’, the Italinas ‘tu’ or ‘Lei’, and the urdu ‘tum’ or ‘aap’ and ‘tu’. But in English we have only you. What is the distinction among persons that so many languages code but that English seems not to code?

We can also say that words are the product of scio-psychological environment of a certain community in this regard one typical example can be given i.e. a German
student can complain that the English word like ‘appreciate’ does not have an equivalent in German language. In English the word appreciate can be used in the sense of ‘x appreciates classical music’, ‘he doesn’t appreciate rock’ in German the equivalents of ‘x likes classical music’ or ‘x enjoys classical music’, but appreciate is not quite the same as enjoy or like or admire or take an interest to real virtues. In English to appreciate x is to be attuned to real virtues x is presumed to have and not to appreciate is to fail to be attuned; it is not to deny that x has virtues. In short, appreciate seems to presuppose in the object qualities deserving admiration in or way that like, admire, and so on do not. It is a verb that enables Americans to talk about differences of taste in a minimally critical and rather democratic manner. Similarly in Urdu we usually use the word khwari which does not have an equivalent in English. So there are hundreds and thousands of words that are the product of the socio-cultural factors of a society.

Differences of this kind in the lexicons of languages are always fascinating. If one language has a gap where the other language has a word, does the first language lack also the idea that is the word’s meaning? So long as the ideas concern social life we are not surprised that cross-language differences exist. However, the differences extend also to terms that make references to the physical world; for example, to the names for colors.

In many languages, for instance, there is a single word for both green and blue. It is assumed that the word was used for sea and then, by abstraction, for just that range of
colors which the sea passes through; the greens and blues are used. In a similar way our color terms orange and rose and olive were first object names but have come to be names for the colors the objects exemplify. In Urdu, we use the word *piazi* which is from the object *piaz* (*onion*). We can see how differences in the scope of particular color terms might arise in this way. But what cannot be told from the linguistic evidence alone is what *such* differences signify about the thought and perception of the people who use them.

It is thought that every person sees the reality i.e. the world *around* him or her in the same form. The concrete objects like a chair or a cat and the actions like walking, playing etc. are understood with the help of ‘itemized inventories’. They differ, of course, in the sounds they employ, but the ‘inventory’ is always the same. The word ‘chair’ has different vowel system and ‘kursi’ (chair) has different representations of sound. Some use hard sounds or soft ones. The object or action remains the same but words differ. It is found that one language may contain a few items more than another for one particular item. We can quote here a typical example from Urdu language, where we have the word ‘ghairat’ (honour) for a special kind of connotation. Whereas English *does* not provide any word which can convey the same sense. However, these inequalities are in the lexical fringe and as it is said ‘they do not disturb ‘’the great core of common inventory’’.
2.9 **READING COMPREHENSION AS INFLUENCED BY ATTITUDE**

Model of attitude influence upon reading and learning to read is derived from the area of social psychology. This model attempts to explain the roles of affect and cognition in reading comprehension. The core of the attitude-influence model explains that a reader's whole attitude towards reading e.g. prevailing feelings and evaluative beliefs about reading and action readiness for reading influences the intention to read, in turn influences reading behavior. Extrinsic motivation, involvement, prior knowledge, and purpose are the factors seen as affecting the attitude-reading relationship. Therefore, classroom environments conducive to effective learning, e.g. cooling/heating system, variety of books, table, and areas with comfortable chairs will enhance student's intention to read.

The psycholinguistic approach to study the process itself can help in designing the models for our situation (Pakistani context) and enhance the view that the concept we have of reading strongly influences the way it is taught. An analysis of the process of reading can help designing the teaching of reading to the Pakistani learners and their cognitive and personal development. Reading does not begin and end with the learning of decoding skills, but continues throughout life. The reader, at all ages, learns how to achieve desired reading outcomes. As the learner becomes more proficient, he is able to draw new insights and respond more meaningfully to the
printed page. Different critics have presented reading in a different way but one can say that many factors determine the ability to read and most factors are interdependent. So the chapter looks at one of the factors in reading skills i.e. cognitive factors.

2.10 **READING AS A DYNAMIC PROCESS**

The terms dynamic and trans-active clearly indicate the process itself. In this connection the main emphasis of a successful reading plan should be considering all the stages and development reading skills that is from the basic skills to higher order critical abilities; representing its components in isolation and in static form is a distortion of the process itself.

It is important that the pupil is taught the skill of reading to such a level that would enable him/her to give an accurate expression of a text that corresponds to his mental maturity level. Since the use of reading is a function of a learner’s intellectual development it may or may not respond to a particular instruction. Research on teaching is being widely published but the way it is actually practiced is still undermined by the teaching programme. For example in Pakistani institutions there is no teaching plan as far as literacy development is concerned. Resultantly, the learners at higher level do not achieve the reading maturity and fail to meet the challenges in their practical life. The researchers feels that to have a successful teaching of reading skill the instructors should keep themselves abreast with the latest research findings in this regard. For example the technique of using cloze text reading sometime back had
proved unsuccessful, however after more research it is now clear that cloze text exercises do help in the development of language learning and in the improvement of reading but there is a possibility that the teachers who do not keep updating their skills do not know the latest development in this connection may not succeed to become effective teachers of reading skill.

Language learning is individual but occurs in society, which has strong indirect effects on the model used at the various critical learning instances. Teachers require a clear set of guideline to practice the theories they learn in developing the language skills. In the previous sections of this chapters the researcher highlighted some of the suggested reading models and in the forthcoming parts she intends to discuss the reading processes.

2.11 **READING AS A DECODING PROCESS**

Reading comprehension can best be described in terms of a number of sub-skills that have been identified in a lot of research work done over the years. It is an independent component activated in a process of understanding a text\textsuperscript{27}. Comprehension is the basis of understanding what we read and learning to read better is linked with a higher level of understanding. Learning is the modification of what we already learn as a consequence of our experience with the world around us. Comprehension and learning cannot be separated. Comprehension helps to get a better grip on all that we have learnt and all the problems and complications associated with these
relationships. Reading comprehension has sub-skills that have to be activated in the process of understanding.

2.12 DURATION OF FIXATION

The reading text is basically dependent on visual details. It seems to be better when it is fast. When it slows down, the reader starts to analyze and may lose information. The brain must therefore move faster than the eye and not allow itself to be slowed down by excess visual detail.

2.13 WORD RECOGNITION

The element of perception plays a vital role in understanding of any language. The spoken words and written words have different perceptual effects on the mind of the reader. In case of written words, the understanding system receives the input of lines, curves and spaces, or an acoustic wave form, and it must use this input to make contact with a store of information about words and the mental equivalent of a dictionary in order to decide what words have been presented. For a number of years identifying words is an essential stage in comprehension, and psycholinguists are becoming increasingly interested in both word recognition itself, and its relation to other parts of the language understanding system. The problem of word recognition was primarily due to the fact that psycholinguists neglected this area of research,
particularly in second language learning where the mental representation and the conceptual understanding of the words differ in reading process.

2.13.1 PARSING

The words in a sentence are not simply strung together; they form natural groups, phrases and clauses. The understanding of sentences requires comprehension of appropriate grouping at the sentence level. For example in a sentence: ‘The little old man walked in the park’. The words ‘the little old man’ must be grouped together because they refer to a single semantic unit that is a ‘person’. Other similar phrases have slightly different interpretations. For example, ‘the little old men’ refers to a group of people. The correct interpretation of the sentence therefore depends on the words being grouped together appropriately.

Identifying the basic activation action or subject-predicate relationship is a first-order task of sentence decoding. Since the subject of the sentence contains a noun or noun cluster and the predicate contains a verb or a verb cluster, the diagram of this basic structure of the English sentence must be identified by the reader i.e. \( S \) (Sentence) = NC (noun cluster) + VC (verb cluster). Through writing-reading experiences the reader repeatedly encounters certain common variations in the basic sentence. In his early publications Chomsky (1957) termed these common variations ‘kernel’ sentences.29
From the basic sentence patterns, the speaker or writer can generate an infinite number of sentences. He does this by changing the word forms, and by utilizing one or more internal sentence operations called ‘Transformations’, that is, by combination, inversion, addition, deletion and substitution.

In the writing of kernel sentences and in transforming and combining them, the writer makes use of two sets of grammatical principles – ‘accidence’ and ‘syntax’. When the reader becomes familiar with these rules, he can internalize them and thus focus directly on following the writer’s meaning rather than his form. Here a teacher has to be very particular that L2 readers get familiar with such formation. Unfortunately in Pakistan, we mostly adopt Grammar Translation Method and only the translation mode is adopted which hampers the comprehension of a text.

Accidence consists of those evolved rules of usage by which we alter the form of individual words to fit language uses, for example, changing nouns into singular or plural or indicating possessives, etc. Syntax consists of the method by which we arrange words in a systematic and meaningful manner with the help of content and structural word. Content words usually carry the fundamental referential meaning of the sentence. Functional words usually serve grammatical meaning purposes.

The understanding of the spoken form of language is due to the oral pitch, stress and juncture by which the speaker conveys intensity, emphasis, breaks and transitions of thought. The listener is also aided by the speaker’s paralanguage -- the gestures, facial
expressions, and body positions used to convey nuances of meaning. The writer on the other hand may portray these in his accompanying description. More often, the reader aided by his oral-aural experience, must infer these cues from contextual association and from the writer's use of punctuation and typography. Other types of sentences that require reader insight are those which gain meaning through their situational or linguistic context. Sentences are given meanings in the context. A sentence may be semantically complete in meaning, even though it is contextually incomplete in form, e.g. 'when?' 'I guess' – such a sentence structure is the so-called 'incomplete' or elliptical form, which is common in oral communication. This point to an important consideration about sentences and thought: sentence meaning is not constructed of the linear addition of word meanings, nor is it to give meanings to individual sentences in a paragraph. The reader is required to perceive the sentence in its larger language/thought structure – its paragraph unit, its flow of expression, or its expository argument.

So, it can be concluded that to decode the literal meaning of the writer's statements, the reader will draw heavily upon both word abilities and language processing. A reader will need to recognize and analyze word forms with their meanings with such competence that their perceived denotative meaning will spring immediately to mind as he encounters them in print. Here he needs language contexts and if he understands the basic nature of the sentence, he will be able to combine the content and function words to recreate the larger predictive meaning the writer intended.
The mature reader does not reconstruct the literal meaning of the writer's statement in isolation of the context in which it occurs, except in rare reading situations. Usually he reads 'text', and the ongoing text will help him anticipate the meaning of the sentence. In recognizing or analyzing the words of the sentence while fitting them into their large predictive statement, he confirms or modifies the meaning he anticipated which is not taken care of in our institutions.

2.13.2 Semantic Processes in Interpretation

Although grouping does not itself amount to interpretation, words are grouped together so that a sentence is determined by a further set of rules specifying the kinds of things that particular groups of words refer to, and what relations hold among those things.

The language system uses two kinds of information in interpreting sentences. First, it uses information about the meanings of particular words, the kind of information that is to be found in a dictionary, though this information may be organized very differently in the mind of a language user from the way that it is set out in say, the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English. The other kind of information tells how word meanings are combined to produce the meanings of phrases and eventually those of sentences. In fact it is wrong to stop at sentence meaning. Units larger than sentences discourse and texts have meanings that go beyond that of their component sentences.
Because concepts usually have word labels, the reader becomes involved with thought processing as soon as he encounters the individual words of a sentence. He will need to identify whether the word is used as a content referent and he will need to determine whether it is employed denotatively or connotatively.

The ability to differentiate between the denotative and connotative use of terms is a fundamental requirement for careful interpretation of content. A particular word may have its denotation: a certain set of descriptors that form its specific representation – its literal identification as found in its basic dictionary definition (Lion: a ferocious animal). On the other hand connotation is a set of generalized feelings and implied associations e.g. (Lion: a brave and strong person). So when the reading of a message has been meaningful, it produces some reader reaction. In part, reader reaction involves what effect the message has upon the cognitive and affective structure of the reader during and after reading.

Through application or assimilation of the meaning gained by interpretation, reader reaction serves both to terminate one specific reading act and to sow the seeds for succeeding reading acts. The schematic map, used as a model of reading behavior illustrates this by representing feedback from reaction through application, affect and assimilation to the revision of the reader's mind-set, the improvement of readiness background, and the adjustment of decoding-interpretive processes. All these factors are not considered when we plan a reading lesson in Pakistan.
2.13.3 PRAGMATIC INTERPRETATION

Pragmatic interpretation is made more complicated by the fact that what people mean is not what they say. The message that they are trying to convey, is often different from what they actually say. Sometimes as in extreme cases, they say the opposite of what they mean to create an ironical effect. The implication of pragmatics in interpreting psycholinguists aim only to describe how the point of an utterance and hence the intended response to it, is determined, and not whether a command is actually obeyed.

The language understanding system copes easily with these complications, but constructing an adequate theory of how it does so is difficult. However, a theory of language understanding must do more than simply describe each component of the system. It must also describe how the components act together to produce understanding. The semantic interpretation of a sentence, for example specifies the range of situations that that sentence could describe, but does not determine which one it actually describes in particular use. So a psycholinguistic theory is necessary as it describes how the information is actually computed and this knowledge could be utilized to solve the problem of comprehension and development of reading skills in Pakistan.
2.14 **LEXICAL FEATURES**

With the help of the analysis of the lexicon of different communities we can see how words are perceived discriminatory. For example, in the Eskimo lexicon there are three different words to distinguish three varieties of snow. There are no single-word equivalents for these in English. The word 'snow' would be used to describe all three. What psychological conclusions can be drawn from these data? Does the Eskimo see differences and similarities that the English speaking community is unable to see? Or to take the example of the term *ghairat* used in our society. Is this the concept or the term itself which is used as such?

It is suggested by the psychologists that the words are used meaningfully when they are selectively employed with reference to some kind of environment—whether physical, social or linguistic. Words are used meaningfully when they are selectively employed with reference to some kind of environment, whether physical, social, or linguistic. Every society or community is a different society and the understanding of the events and social factors is also different. The words chosen or used are according to the understanding of the world. In this context it is argued that people tend to use the words according to how they perceive it. A commonly quoted example is of the words used for snow by Eskimos and Americans. Both see the same thing but since they have a different experience and use, they tend to have different ways of using the words for it. Similarly, there are many words for dog in American culture and
multiple names for camels in Saudi Arabia. This reveals the fact that every linguistic community uses the words according to their own cultural implications. Such cultural analysis enhances the importance of that particular idea used in a society. As a result, Whorf concludes that different communities organize their world on a dimension may be overlooked by others and this phenomenon is present in every human language. In Pakistan the words used for marriage ceremony are taken from ‘hindi’ because we follow some of the rituals used in their culture.

2.15 LINGUISTICS AND READING

The process of reading consists of identifying linguistic forms. These are the grammatical structures, word-formation and also the graphic symbols that are represented in the reading matter. It must be understood clearly that linguistic forms have meanings. According to James Walden(1969:77):

If a person has read a sentence, usually it has been understood, or so it is accepted; however, it is also possible he may not have understood it. In the sentence ‘space is finite or curved, but unbind and constantly expanding’, any claim to say that improving this sentence without understanding it, is a claim for a far greater competence then that of a mimicking parrot. Comprehension is concerned with the syntax, word composition and other systems within the sentence structure like definition and grammatical structure.31

It is possible for a native speaker to do so, but quite difficult for a non-native speaker to claim the same. The linguistically deficient native and non-native would read it without full and complete comprehension. The fact is that linguistic reading is important in language learning; as a student progresses,
comprehension becomes more stable and pre-conceived ideas or suppositions are slowly lessened. Recognizing grammatical structures in reading is essential in comprehension. We need to think what the word means as we read.

2.16 KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN READING

The forms that make up linguistic knowledge are vast and varied. Knowledge may be of unanalyzed chunks or of a re-combinable constituent. What one needs to recognize is that reading is a receptive skill and knowledge is a constituent of the conditions that reading extends towards competent learning. The receptive skills are not only developed in the first stage, but also developed to a higher degree than the productive skills. It is important that while developing language learning in reading, the information gained from the exposure stored by the learner is used productively for recombination in producing responses or in productive comprehension. The attempt in developing sound comprehension and extending knowledge is to create a learning environment where natural language text is used. Learners should feel that they are not bound to one book text, which they may sometimes fail to adequately comprehend (Clay 1977:79). The ‘noticeable-differences’ principle is important as it helps the reader to find solutions while thinking more flexibly. Learners gain benefits to:

i. Read for meaning

ii. Learn words in grammatical meaning context

iii. Find adequate vocabulary problem solutions
This also helps the teacher to discern counter problems related to:

i. behavior patterns in reading

ii. checking letter recognition

iii. transferring text reading to a variety of books’

2.17 THE PURPOSE OF READING

There are various reasons why a student may read a passage to prepare for an examination or a test or perhaps for his own general interest. A person may also read to clear a point on a particular subject, or simply to pass time. Purposes are varied and reading styles may also differ. However, using reading for language purpose does require that the person uses these different styles for revising the material or for mastering the ideas that come in to practice daily. In reading practice, readers are affected by the kinds of questions they anticipate they might be required to answer. For example, while preparing to write an abstract or summary, some students perform well when they are set to answer questions within a framework of expectations. This shows then that a reader’s purpose does affect what he can do after he has finished reading, and also that what he is doing while reading is equally affected. Who sets the paper and how the follow up takes place is also equally important. According to the same authors, college educators mostly do not follow a set purpose in reading and so the problem is generally persistent.
2.18 **THE STYLE OF READING**

While comprehension describes an achievement like winning a race, reading style is very dependent on how a reader takes time off to think, while reading a difficult task. Poor readers take less time off than do good readers. The more often a reader pauses, the more he/she will be thinking. However, though this may well fall within the category of slow reading, pauses, regressions or double reading of passages are in some ways good reading styles, it does not mean that reading styles cannot be varied. While observing different reading styles it is generally more important to see actually where the reader stops to think? Why? And where would it be more advantageous to stop. Was the reader too slow or too quick?

2.19 **READABILITY AND READING FOR LEARNING**

Good readers, as the researcher has already mentioned, know when to stop and think. However how do good readers become better at reading and understanding the text? There are three factors that may be important in helping readers and assisting the process of reading.

i. Readability

ii. Structure and context

iii. Reading styles and purpose
2.19.1 READABILITY

Readability is a measure of the style of a piece of writing. It is not a measure of the difficulty of a text, but it does help to predict well the judgments of teachers and pupils. In readability we measure the number of words per sentence or the indirect measure of syntax complexity and the length and frequency of words. It is also a useful measure of demands placed on the vocabulary of the reader.

It is quite evident that all teachers are not very good judges of text difficulty. However, those who seem to be good judges, actually produce average ranking of given passages. These rankings often cannot be bettered by any readability formula when measured against pupil/estimates. Calculating readability can only be done by one teacher on one book at a time when required. It is clear then, that subjective assessors would find their task much more difficult were they given an absolute grading of one passage, instead of ranking several. Readability measures are useful when selecting books for students. Teachers could give students passages with an easy style.

Readability is also more useful in worksheets or workbooks given to students to work on their own. Readability however, is a measure more of style than of context or presentation and is widely varying\textsuperscript{33}. Therefore techniques and course book must both be taken into account for readability to be productive.
2.19.2 STRUCTURE AND CONTEXT

Difficulty is also a part of the functioning of structure and context in learning and reading. In considering structure and context we find that the reader has more to learn and assimilate if the material selected is new and difficult to absorb. So this is 'dense' and applies to a number of features of a text and each of them is equally important.

Brevity, a style in writing, sometimes presents difficulties in comprehension particularly in epigrammatic writing. Writing is dense when general examples are used to illustrate generalizations. However, many students may fail to pick out the essential when brevity is the touchstone of style used to illustrate anecdotes.

Abstractions of the material and its complexity in structure and content should be considered when using dense passages to practice comprehension and reading language. Reading with ease is also an important factor in generality of theme. This is easier to recognize than to define, measure or control. The sequences that are easier to assimilate are:

i. Those that follow a natural sequence of events

ii. A basis of objects and ideas taken to be analogous instances of

One and the same thing
Suppose a more or less complex logical structure is substituted for the primitive narrative, no arrival at an objective assessment of the structure of discourse of the text can be guaranteed. No objective technique has been established for determining these matters. Existing methods are still too time-consuming to be of great value. Structure and context with regard to abstractness appear to present greater complexity in reading variables, and to increase readability problems.

2.19.3 EFFECT OF STYLE AND PURPOSE

The purpose of reading affects the reading style a person uses to accomplish his need to attain the specific goal. There are various purposes of reading and these categories cannot be limited into divisions. The kind of questions a reader anticipates is important for the purpose and reading style. However the purpose does not necessarily affect what the person does after completing the actual reading.

Good readers differ from poor readers in their ability to utilize from the reading material items of information that do not hold their interest in a vital way. Good readers also know when and how to vary styles. It does not mean, however, that good readers should be left to struggle entirely by themselves. In any reading learning course, language and context may lend themselves to reasonably accurate measurement, but the superficial differences of flexible and less flexible readers cannot be used as a standard of measurement. The ability and willingness of readers to reflect on the matter they have been given to read must be followed up with the teacher's attempt to further develop and encourage
appropriate reading styles for the learner. To increase the incidence of a pupil's false
starts or to develop fictitious sub-skills, merely hinders both style and reading purpose.

2.20 VARIABLES IN READING

According to Strang (1977:37-67) variability is not always a simple condition. When the reader engages in reading, the focus and attention may cause difficulty. The simplification of the text will alter that condition. It is believed that this is a more complex issue then is traditionally understood. Whether the word is the cause of the difficulty area, or the progressive occurrence of indexed frequency lists, or in-word references, usually these require measurement in length and progressive reading problems. It is not necessarily the measurement of sentence length but the numbers as they transform in deep structure levels and produce meanings both with the subordinate clauses and the formula each individual uses for readability. Letters in a passage also cause a similar predictability in degrees of difference.

Non-native students of English have to practice and understand the linguistic features of a text and the tense, grammatical and structural devices inherent in the relationships between word and sentence. It becomes more difficult for these learners since the variables present no particular linguistic description for the interaction. However, given a predicated syntax, these difficulties may be more easily overcome.
Comprehension depends on how much activity has occurred within this specific availability of knowledge, and the ability to understand it, and to enable the memory to act upon it.

2.20.1 SYNTAX BASED COMPONENTS IN READING

Reading requires the reader to decode meaning and consider various semantic factors. Syntactic feature according to Frank Davies requires the student to understand those devices related to syntactic structures so as to understand text. The reader would only be able to understand the relationship between parts of a text if he is aware of the phrase in its order, and its functions, modifiers and antecedents. He can then extract the gist from the semantic relationships of the language, the material and the word placed in the order that confront him. These interrelated components of sentence structure, function words, and affixes that serve as markers of grammatical relations, also do the same for rhetorical structure.

A reader has to first recognize the basic parts of a sentence, its constituent, main and subordinate clauses, their predicate and arguments in prepositional terms and the structures of the sentence, verb and object (SVO).

Foreign language learners tend to make mistakes in their comprehension of ordering, so students often misinterpret the core relationships of words. Successful readers do get the inner meanings of more complicated sentences but only if there are
constituents. Parsing sentences in their natural surface structure often helps them to speed comprehension and understand the grammatical formation. It has been observed by the researcher that Pakistani learners have many problems with the grammatical formations in English that creates problems in decoding process.

2.20.2 THE READING PROCESS EMPHASIS

A skilled reader has little difficulty with pronunciation or even with spelling, as he is already aware of the phonetic values of letters and combinations of letters. It is easy for the average reader to recognize common words, and for a skilled reader, rare words may also be easy. In Pakistan it is a normal practice to read aloud and words are mispronounced. However, the whole reading process has not been fully recognized or even understood and is quite a problem for Reading teachers. Words can be recognized even though they may be printed in different typefaces or styles, curves or sizes. It is more important to learn the cues from the letters and words composing them. When we read ordinarily, we often overlook print mistakes. There is still no evidence to support the view that a good reader recognizes words by the outlines or general shapes. Sometimes you see the shape of a dog but you can't recognize the word dog. Starter readers sometimes use shape in trying to recognize words, but they will be overwhelmed if they depend solely on shape parameters in preference to recognition of letters themselves.
In the good reader, the process of rapid word recognition depends on his ability to integrate the information provided by the separate letters composing the word. The identification of some letters is more critical than others. The recognition of a word is, it seems, correlated rather highly with its frequency of use. Word recognition in the reading process, is dependent upon how often a reader gets to use and see the word.

Sometimes a good reader may stumble over a word he has never seen before, but he can usually get the gist of such words through phonological and morphological patterns for pronunciation and meaning, and a lot of this will depend on the context.

Highly skilled readers are able to merge together and build up an impression of a message that is as meaningful as a message that is read out aloud with the correct pronunciation. Some readers can grasp the meaning from the printed message more directly. According to Halliday, slow readers (and even skilled readers) may notice problems with articulation when reading difficult material. Reading is a highly complex process and is not learnt at once. It takes time and has numerous components and each has to be learned and practiced. Some of these components are:

i. The way a reader processes unfamiliar words
ii. Comprehension skills acquired in reasoning
iii. Individual differences in rate and reading accuracy

These differences once learned can help the reader to improve reading skills.
2.20.3 **READING PROCESS AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT**

Language research summaries show that a child’s language development is for the most part mature and sufficiently equipped to handle most forms of discussions from beginning to the first six years of life. He can recognize and produce good sentences, understand the difference between grammatical and non-grammatical sentences and comprehend sentences that produce different surface structures but based on a similar deep meaning.

The child’s substantial growth in language structures occurs in elementary school. Language development and reading growth are dependent on each other and this occurs in standard and non-standard dialects. The relationship between language experience and the reading process has to be accounted for. Language development has to be understood with its various components. These are:

i. Phonology

ii. Letter study

iii. Vocabulary development
2.20.4 PHONOLOGY

Studies have shown that by the time a child enters the first grade, he has developed a good degree of control over his phonological system, considering that years in school is taken to represent some degree of skill in attainment. Grade levels in elementary schools tend to reflect age and some achievement too. By the time a child is four years, he has mastered all the basic sounds of his language. Children do not come to school ignorant, though they may leave it ignorant. Children pick up good morphological development by the time they reach primary school.

The child is provided a good entrance to a Standard English model in a language development opportunity in school. The conditions set by the school if properly met will help the phonological language learning of the child. Variations in non-standard phonological systems may cause meaning problems. However, differences in dialect exist; good reading programs will develop good spoken skills.

2.20.5 LETTER STUDY

Letter study is as important as the phonological system; patterns have to be acknowledged along with the sound system for consistency in language development. According to Gibson\textsuperscript{37} children develop higher-order generalizations by following
English spelling patterns. Language development improves as the child’s limited experience increases. Children are therefore able to adjust to a variety of functional levels from the early middle to a high level with considerable ease.

The written language material that a child is given for instructional setting is usually a level higher than the oral level and the opportunity for the development of the functional variety increases as the letter study increases at the formal level.

2.20.6 VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Studies by various researchers including Brown, Fraser and Norris\(^3\) indicate that by the first grade a child is able to comprehend sentences and produce expanded and elaborated sentences through the use of words, phrases and other subordinating elements. These researches also show that the development of vocabulary extends through the elementary grades.

The length of the compositions and clauses used in oral and written language expression increases with age. The vocabulary grows in relation to age far more in writing than in oral language. An understanding of the relationship between the communication process and the syntactical forms is of importance to the classroom teacher and the learner. Understanding a paragraph is dependent upon the reader’s ability to select the right elements and synthesize them in the right relationship
between the horizontal parts of the sentences and the vertical options in vocabulary development at that point in the process.

2.21 **INDIVIDUAL LEARNING DIFFERENCES**

It is a fact that some learners are able to comprehend and remember information better than others. Individual aptitudes differ, depending on the differences involved in activated knowledge that is available. In one study, it was found that academically successful, average and less successful 5th grade students who were asked to learn new material found it rather difficult to remember facts like elaboration. It was also found that differences existed between groups of students, with the most successful students producing the greatest number of precise elaboration, and those least successful providing the least number. The memory scores of the students were affected by the precision of students' elaboration. It seemed that when students were given statements that had been precisely elaborated, their retention was better than when they were given non-specific statements for elaboration.

The less successful candidates did not activate their knowledge because they did not get the significance of the factual context they were learning. Perhaps they lacked the knowledge required to elaborate precisely or failed to ask themselves relevant questions about the information they were trying to learn. Successful candidates
usually also ask themselves relevant questions on a given passage while unsuccessful candidates usually re-read a passage.

2.21.1 LEARNING BY UNDERSTANDING

The reader should learn by understanding not simply reading or memorizing. Where there are unrelated items, reading by memorization is acceptable. When we learn by understanding we select reading as a digestive process. Memorizing is like repetition. Learning by understanding requires us to be flexible so that as we read we are able to understand the mind of the writer. There are levels of learning and understanding. It is possible to learn things superficially without understanding anything about them, by rote memorization, though this is brittle, and soon lost. It is better to let the mind play on details of form or structure. Much more is retained and can be used in a flexible manner. It is best, however, to understand what one has read.

In conclusion, it could be said that there are many misperceptions about Reading. To some people, words are merely a supplement to pictures, to others Reading is a passive process-as many think it word calling. If you can pronounce the words correctly you are Reading—even though you have no idea what the words mean. It could be said that Reading is more than seeing words clearly, more than pronouncing words and even comprehension is sometimes beyond the words as well. To judge that one has to analyze different models of Reading, and the development of different skills with the help of those models.
As it has been seen in the previous chapters that the inner process of reading is quite complicated; it could be said that effective language teaching should be constructed on the basis of what actually happens in the learning process. The reading models are a set of assumptions about the way in which the reader derives meaning from the text. By providing some possible accounts of the complex mental process of reading, the models can give guidance on how to design the teaching of reading. Considering content and formal schemata we can come to another vital factor in second language process – the socio-cultural factor. This brings us to the role of affect and culture in developing Reading skills. It is readily apparent from just a survey of research on second language acquisition that affective factors play major roles in successful Reading. Thus one could conclude that psychological as well as socio-linguistic elements play a major role in understanding a text. Just as language, ego, self-esteem, empathy and motivation are vital factors in the acquisition of spoken discourse Reading is subject to variability within the affective domain.

The researcher now likes to explore the socio-linguistic frames of reference in L2 Reading that has become the focus of active research on ELT scenario.
END NOTES


5 John Locke, An Essay concerning Human Understanding. (Chicago Great books of the Western World, Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952)


8 L. Bloomfield, Teaching Children to Read. (In Bloom Field, Leonard and Barnhart, Clarence L., 1961)


10 Ibid., 449


14 Ibid, 125-153

15 Ibid

16 Ibid, 212-13


Ibid


ibid 18


(Eds.), Theoretical and Process of Reading (4th Edition), International Reading Association, 1994) 1093-1130

26 Ibid


28 Ibid, 20


31 J. Walden, Oral Language in Reading, (Illinois, National Council of Teachers of English, 1969) 77

33 ibid, 83


36 Ibid, 116


CHAPTER 3

IMPACT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS ON SECOND LANGUAGE READING

The researcher and linguists started considering the importance of culture in language teaching in the mid sixties. In the past this aspect was not taken into account in planning and language pedagogy, the linguists had restricted themselves to the formal aspects of language; for example linguists from Saussuer to Chomski studied language as a 'pure' and 'abstract' form, they did not take into account the socio-cultural aspects of a language. At present a lot of research is being done in the field of culture and language to enhance the scope of learning.

This chapter seeks to provide a framework regarding social theories of second language learning and its relevance with second language learning in Pakistan. It also highlights the new approach in teaching i.e. socio-cultural theory and some of the factors, which are directly linked with the learning styles and techniques of the second language learners in general, and reading skills in particular. It also provides an overview of what theory, research and practice have to tell us about the subject. In
addition, the subject matter presented here can help the Pakistani English teachers in understanding the learning theory which presents a new outlook as far as reading in second language is concerned. It provides background for the exploitation of this knowledge in classroom action, assessment and analysis. The main emphasis is on the importance of social and cultural content and its use in the development of second language reading skills. In this regard we have to understand what is meant by culture.

3.1 CULTURE: DEFINITION

Culture may have different meanings for different professionals or teachers. According to Kramsch (1998:127)⁴⁰, culture is ‘membership in a discourse community that shares a common social space and history, and a common system of standards for perceiving, believing, evaluating and action. The term culture will be used in the sense of whatever a person must have in order to function and live in a particular society’.

3.1.1 LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Regarding concept of a language Chomskian theory was considered with suspicion because it was said that he reduced human language to an artificial language. He did not consider other factors involved in it. With the development of socio-linguistics as a distinct discipline in the mid sixties, the study of language assumed a new direction.
Now language was perceived as a combination of internal and external factors. It will be apt to quote Stern (1983: 250) here:

"Cultural understanding and cross cultural comparisons are a necessary component of language pedagogy."\textsuperscript{41}

\section*{3.1.2 Impact of Culture on Language}

It is a known fact that language does not exist without a social set up. It is embedded in the culture of a people and reflects the beliefs and sentiments of the speech community. Every language has specific vocabulary. The concepts of which are totally different in another language. Similarly the meaning of a word is not absolute in any language. It is conditioned by social conventions, and because of this interrelationship between language and culture it is difficult to establish exact equivalence between words and expressions into languages. The researcher has come across many such situations where it is difficult to give an exact synonym in English for an Urdu word or vice versa. One can quote several examples to prove this point one of them is quoted here i.e. the word \textit{spoon feeding} which has no equivalent in Urdu. Similarly the word \textit{ghairat} or \textit{munafiq} has no exact equivalent word (closest words in English - \textit{honour or hypocrite}). Even if the words sometimes correspond in denotations, they may very in connotation.
3.2.2 IMPACT OF CULTURE AND SOCIETY ON SECOND LANGUAGE READING SKILLS

While reading a foreign/second language text, three levels of meaning are extracted: lexical meaning, structural or grammatical meaning and socio-cultural meaning. For a lexical or grammatical meaning, a learner can consult a dictionary. It is socio-cultural meaning that is the most difficult for a second language learner, because it is basically related to values, beliefs and attitudes of the speech community. It is known that reading is a multi-faceted and complex skill. It does not comprise only a decoding operation because to get a message correctly or properly it is inevitable that the reader understands the underlying message as well. To comprehend the text one needs to have an insight into the culture of target language. Effective reading cannot occur without an orientation towards the culture of the target language. As a teacher it is the observation of the researcher that unwillingness or inability to understand or accept the culture of the target language can hamper the learner's success. It is believed thus that the success of a second language program therefore, depends on reducing the culture bondage of a student and motivating him to understand the culture of the target language.
3.3 **MOTIVATION AND ITS IMPACT ON LEARNING**

Motivation is derived from the word 'mover' which means 'to move'. Therefore, motivation is the influence of needs and desires on the intensity and direction of behavior. Too often even professional educators share the public misconception of reading as a narrow, simplistic process.

As one aspect of human behavior, reading is influenced by what is human in the reader. Each specific instance of reading and learning to read is the behavioral product of the reader's motivating forces acting in concert with those personal resources which he brings to bear upon the reading situation e.g. the class environment and social situation. The reader's motivational set is influenced by the primary and secondary needs. The personal resources of the reader comprise the reader's broader reading potential and also it includes the reader's mental ability, emotional state physiological condition, as well as his or her general linguistic, and reading experiential background. The behavior of an adult reader, in addition, can be influenced by the conditions of reading. Reading and its learning thus are influenced by the totality of the reader's human condition (David H. Russell, 1970:3)\(^4^2\). To understand how reading performance and progress may vary from pupil to pupil we must understand something of the reader as a human.
According to Ojemann (1954:7) any reasonable complex behavior is the product of the ‘motivational forces’ influencing the individual and the available resources upon which the individual can call to make the responses that are appropriate to the situation in which the behavior takes place. Reader readiness is the basic component by which reading act is initiated. The opening paragraph of reading readiness by Downing and Thackray clearly defines the modern view:

The term ‘readiness’ for any kind of learning refers to the stage; firstly, when the child can learn easily and without emotional strain and secondly, when the child can learn profitably because efforts at teaching give gratifying results. Note that ‘readiness’ does not necessarily imply that a child achieves this state only through growth or maturation. He may also arrive at readiness through having completed the prior learning on which the new learning is based. Mackay (1971:228), in describing part of a preparatory program, puts it like this:

The teacher...is not waiting for readiness to happen; she is drawing children nearer and nearer to the point at which they wish to participate. It is not just a matter of (teachers) letting children wallow in a rich environment; they must use that environment to bring children closer to the interpretation of print. From statements such as these it can be seen that there is now a great deal more emphasis on the value of training in helping the child to reach the point when he can begin to read. But the most important consideration is ‘a stimulating learning environment’.

There is a key element of this readiness of reading, and that is ‘the motivation to read’. The motivation drive makes a reader read successfully and in a positive sense, this drive is generated by certain motivational forces, such as needs, incentives, interests and the like, which the reader, consciously or unconsciously feels he must
satisfy. The situation in which the reading occurs or should occur will involve not only the immediate physical circumstances, including the written source, but also the reader's interpretation of his implied reading setting. For example, the influence of the teacher's personality who made the reading assignment and/or the reader's value judgment of the topic or type of material to be read which could be understood easily. The effectiveness with which the reader satisfies the needs of the reading situation will depend upon the 'available' personal resources, which the reader can bring to bear in that situation e.g. the intellectual, physical, social, cultural, emotional and experiential characteristics of the reader. The condition of the reader's resources may exert a negative as well as positive influence upon reading performance.

Reading requires a human potential beyond the mastery of symbolic, linguistic and cognitive mechanics. Affective elements cannot be ignored. There is a learning curve of anxiety and involvement that needs to be recognized and exploited in developing strategies for the teaching of reading. These elements are operative in all people, young or old.

Most of the thematic substance of human writing is closely related to the 'human condition' and the issues that influence it. Affective elements are of crucial importance in all considerations of the reading process. One of them is motivation.

Motivation, conscious or unconscious instigates complex human behavior. It may come from outside forces (extrinsic) or from internal tensions (intrinsic). Motivation
can vary in strength (drive) and direction (purposes or interests). Usually the motivation that induces human behavior is formed by some combination of primary needs, secondary or learned needs, or by some situational stimulation. The motivation which activates and directs a reader's responses ordinarily will consist of some combination of the reader's drive level, learned attitudes and interests, prevailing needs of the moment and stimulation specific to the reading situation. It has been observed that efficiency in reading is dependent also on the student's motivational readiness. Lack of interest is an important cause of inefficient reading. To be an efficient reader, the student must first want to learn. Wheat (1955:57-58) remarks:

Interest is an emotional involvement of like or dislike which is associated with attention to some object. Interests arise through the interaction of our basic needs and the means we use to satisfy them. The student who is interested in reading is usually the student for whom reading satisfies the basic needs of self-esteem, esteem of others, curiosity, and success and personal adequacy.46

Teachers are concerned with two phases of interest. First, the interest of the student must somehow be captured if he is to read at all; and second, he must be helped to make reading a habitual activity. Indeed, it is at the point when reading becomes a permanent mode of behavior that reading acquires a motivational force of its own.

3.4 THE INTEGRATION OF CULTURE IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Culture embraces the habits, customs, social behavior, knowledge and assumptions associated with a group of people. Thus it provides a framework regarding social
theories of second language acquisition and its relevance with reading skills. This includes also socio-cultural factors in the language teaching materials.

3.4.1 SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS

The first question to ask ourselves considering socio-cultural factors in our language teaching is whether we should include socio-cultural factors in the teaching process (Wardhagh, R. 1992)\textsuperscript{47}. If the answer is "yes", the question of how much socio-cultural information should be given to learners and what kind of techniques should be used need to be answered. While planning teaching material and methodology a teacher has to be very clear as to how much socio-linguistic information should be passed on to the reader, as a teacher, one should also consider whether the target culture be taken into account while classroom teaching or not. While considering these questions, learners' needs, characteristics and aims should be taken into consideration. For example, in Pakistan the learners come with a different cultural background therefore, developing the concepts regarding the foreign material given to them is a hard task. Thus it is imperative to understand that comprehension cannot take place on only one ground i.e. psychological and cognitively oriented approaches to second language acquisition. We have to admit that aspects of what is often labeled cognition are in fact socio-cultural practices.
Second Language Acquisition (SLA) research is primarily based on secondary evidence-externalized language activity-followed by the use of language in a social situation (vocalization, graphical representations of language, and responses to particular stimuli in controlled setting environment). The point is that language is utilized for some purposes so now the attention is drawn from 'cognitive issues' to the importance of social and cultural factors for SLA. A diverse group of researchers and agendas are engaged in this area but most the terms used are linked with cognitive approaches.

Social practice theory, only recently applied to the problems of SLA most notably by Hall and Van Lier (1995) attempt to capture the interplay between macro social structures and moment-to-moment practices. In this regard socio-cultural theory approach looks at a learner as a social being, an individual and that a language as socially constructed rather than internally intrinsic only. In contrast to practice theory, socio-cultural theory as it is applied in psychology, education and SLA focuses primarily on human development and learning. It emphasizes that learning is a social process mediated by culture and takes place in a social context. It could be said that success in Reading skills depends on teachers helping students mediate or negotiate cultural borders and engage in some form of collateral learning. It is a known fact that language does not exist apart from culture. Should one include the cultural content in Reading material? A very vital question and has been subject to discussion among professionals and teachers for many years. As Pakistani teachers we have to decide how this aspect could be utilized. One main use is that it can foster learner motivation
and conceptual development (McKay, S.L. 2000:7-11)\textsuperscript{49}. Changes in linguistics and learning theory suggest that culture can be used as an important element in Reading classrooms. As we all know, knowing a language goes beyond the knowledge of grammatical rules, vocabulary items and pronunciation of these items. Successful Reading comprehension requires language users to know that culture underlie language in order to get the meaning across (Tyseng, Y. 2000: 11-20)\textsuperscript{50}. Also Tseng suggests that culture and its knowledge effects changes in individual perception and is valid for expanding an individual’s perspective of the world. According to Stuart and Nocon(1996: 431:499)\textsuperscript{51}

"Learning about the lived culture of actual target language speakers as well as about one’s own culture requires tools that assist language learners in negotiating meaning and understanding the communicative and cultural texts in which linguistic codes are used."

So, we can conclude that culture is not something consisting of facts to be learned, but a helpful tool to make learners feel the need to speak and use the target language. In selecting Reading material English teachers have a lot of choices in terms of authentic material but it is surprising that many Pakistani teachers rely on un-interesting textbooks based on literature that focus student’s attention on grammatical structures and obsolete vocabulary. Also the activities chosen are based on teacher-talk and student-listen routines. These practices are unlikely to lead students to develop a genuine interest in comprehending the text. Researcher’s experience of sixteen years tells us that our students lack motivation to learn a language and need variety of excitement while learning. It’s the duty of our English language teachers to
help the students notice that learning a language is not just learning its grammatical rules, vocabulary items and so on. And it is evident that cultural content material will foster learner motivation. McKay, like many other experts, believes that there should be a variety of culture in the materials. If the role of culture in ELT classroom is just to create learner interest towards content and thus towards language, that is highly desirable. But overuse of it is not appropriate. In other words, home and target culture should be integrated. It is also helpful in developing schemata, which is very important for the improvement of Reading skills.

3.5 SKILLS OF READING AND LANGUAGE PROCESSING IN SECOND LANGUAGE SITUATION

Indeed, in the later century, the target language is highly likely to be English; recent estimates suggest that while around 30 million people speak English as a first language, another seven hundred million or so are using it as a second language or learning to do so (Crystal, D 1987: 358). In Pakistan English is taught as a second or third language and Reading skills is the major skill taught in every institution. Everyday observation tells us that the language, or languages, that they already know, influences Pakistani learners' performance in a second language situation. It is obvious from their concepts and comprehension of the L2 Reading material.
Theorists generally accept once more, as we have discussed earlier, that cross-linguistic influences and cultural content play an important role in L2 learning. Listening and Reading are viewed as an integral part of two major perspectives on interaction. One is linked with psycholinguistics and the second with socio linguistics. Psycholinguistics views the learner as operating and developing a relatively autonomous L2 system; socio-linguistics views of interaction are very different. Here, the language learning process is viewed as essentially social; both the identity of the learner, and his language knowledge are collaboratively constructed and reconstructed in the course of comprehension. The learning process itself may be viewed as essentially social and entangled in second language use. More socially oriented researchers view motivation as constantly reconstructed through on going L2 experience. Second language learning is an immensely complex phenomenon. The researcher believes that we can only pursue on better understanding of L2 learning in an organized and productive way if some form of theory or model guides our efforts. For example, one of the models of second language learning is shown in figure taken from Spolsky.(1989: 28)54

This represents a general model of second language as the proposal describes it. The model encapsulates the researchers’ theoretical view on the overall relationship between contextual factors, individual learner differences, learner opportunities and learning outcomes.
The above model clearly defines the situation of a second language learner. There are cognitive as well as affective factors. In cognitive factors intelligence, language aptitude and language learning strategies are concerned. The social context is directly linked with the understanding of language. Social psychologists have long been interested in the idea that the attitudes of the learners towards target language, its speakers, and the learning context, may all play some part in explaining success or lack of it. Research on L2 language attitude has largely been conducted within the framework of broader research on motivation, of which attitudes form one part.

The two perspectives on the learner which we have highlighted so far have concerned first on universal characteristics, and second, on individual characteristics. But it is also possible to view the L2 learner as essentially a social being, and such an interest will lead to concern with learner’s relationship with the social context and the restructuring of the learning opportunities which it makes available. Language, due to its specific properties, is one aspect that makes human beings unique in comparison to other animals and species. The properties include: communication, arbitrary symbolism, regular structure, structure at multiple levels, generation and production, and dynamism. However, language seems to vary across different cultures with different people. Different languages use distinctive phonemes as well as describe and name ideas and concepts differently. In this regard different perspectives on the subject e.g. language acquisition, linguistic relativity, linguistic universals and bilingualism and cultural influences on language and thought, are discussed.
Through the study of bilingualism we may be able to determine whether or not language influence thought. When studying the concept of the language-thought connection, two aspects of bilingualism arise. First, the idea that different languages or multiple languages, occur in separate areas of the brain (Romaine, S. 1995) gives particular credence to the idea of linguistic relativity. Second idea is that the acquisition of different languages is age specific (DeGroot, A.M.B and Berry, C. 1992). Though bilingualism may be a key to understand the debate between linguistic universalism and linguistic relativity the issue still raises many questions and requires additional research. But the issue of whether or not language influences thought is tricky since more than one factor affects thought pattern. Many researchers have used different languages to study the relationship between language and thought, and they have come up with many different hypothesis. But it is proposed that it is not language alone that produces “linguistically” differentiated thought patterns. Rather it is once culture. Though different linguistic cultures have specific language for certain ideas and concept, the culture they are raised in most likely produce their differentiated ways of thinking. If one takes into account the idea of society and its impact on thought processes then both the linguistic universalism and linguistic relativity theories are applicable. Humans are biologically capable of learning any language, but once an individual has passed a certain age, he/she is less likely to develop new language skills. At that point, culture will use the knowledge of words from education to teach a specific way of analyzing the world. So it could be concluded that it is the culture, not purely language, which facilitates a different way
of thinking. When one realizes the use of socio-cultural impact on the use of understanding of the second language, we as teachers can endeavor for the right methodology for teaching reading skills.

3.6 **SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND TEACHER’S ROLE**

This part of the chapter seeks to highlight the new approach in teaching i.e. socio-cultural theory and to discuss some of the factors that are directly linked with the learning styles and techniques of the second language learners. The subject matter presented here can help the Pakistani English teachers in understanding the learning theory which presents a new outlook as far as learning L2 is concerned. As a reading teacher the researcher observes that recent changes in the landscape of research and the broader goals of the profession suggest a need for new ways to conceptualize teacher’s relationship with theories that harmonize with the practical needs of educators.

Socio-cultural theory (SCT) is an approach that attempts to address the problem of conceptual boundaries through emphasis on practical theory and on dialogical relationships between mind and society. For positive results and improvement in an L2 situation this theory also suggests rationale for the teacher’s action research. The need of the hour is that theory should be developed over practical considerations. As
Pakistani teachers we have to consider local particular here and now reality that matters most to us (Toulmin.S 1990)\(^57\). In this regard, reading teachers in Pakistan can benefit and can have a broader outlook so that the reading skills at higher levels could be analyzed and improved. In recent years, much of the attention is paid on learning styles and the research tells us that learning styles are both individually and culturally motivated. Within and given a larger scale, we can see certain learning style preferences among individual surfacing and it has been observed by the researcher that culture and society does play a role in the development of our preferences. That brings us to the relevance of the analysis of the socio-cultural factors that could influence the performance of the learners in reading skills in Pakistan. The cultural and social elements of language has increasingly become important since English has become and international language and moreover, it becomes important as the students strive to communicate their intended meaning and interpret the intentions of others accurately. It has been noted by the researcher that in most of the cases the learner or reader brings his own meanings and understandings.  

Among the available form of expertise, socio-cultural theory is increasingly perceived as a useful conceptual framework within practice oriented research and efforts to bring about educational change i.e. socio-cultural theory examines human activity in a holistic way, rather than separating the domain of theory and practice. In the field of applied linguistics and language learning the researcher's interested in SCT are attempting to find out how it will help in actual language teaching situation. SCT challenges us to think about the ideas of dichotomies together in the unity of theory
and practice, mind and society. Different approaches of learning take into account different aspects like, culture, society, history, mind or cognition or social interactive environment. In this regard SCT encourages us to look at these phenomenons as they work together during particular learning activities. This should also be kept in mind that individuals are constituted by language and culture that can only be maintained and renewed in the community. In this regard we as the teachers of reading skills should take into consideration the point that there is a relationship between teachers and research. A focus on SCT is motivated by several considerations.

First, SCT offers a promising alternative to thinking in terms of boundaries between theory and practice or between mind and society (Newman, F, Holzman L. Lev and Vygotsky 1993)38.

Secondly there is an emerging literature within SCT that deals more directly with the realities and challenges of foreign language classroom instruction then do other approaches. Finally SCT provides a clear and interesting theoretical basis for action research aimed at educational transformation. We as teachers can benefit with the idea that here language is analyzed not as a set of abstract grammar rules assumed to exist in the mind; rather, what matters is the use of language to make sense in and off particular contexts. It has been rightly said that the higher mental functions are shaped by access to, and engagement with language in use. Vygotsky argued that development is fundamentally pragmatic and dynamic, so one cannot understand development by examining its product in isolation from its socio-cultural setting.
Cognitive development as a socially shared activity can only be understood as a process. Thus, the science of such research requires observation of social and cultural activity as it occurs and as it changes over time.

Here it is important to know that an interpretation based on socio-cultural theory presents the classroom as a place where students and teachers engage socio-culturally sanctioned communicative practices. In a reading classroom in Pakistan, it is important that you provide your learners material which is in concert with the cultural and social background of the learners and it comes from the personal experience of the researcher that the learners use varied resources for making meaning in ways that both reflect their identity based on past experiences and create new meaning from the reading material according to their personal identities (Lier L. Van 2000: 245-259)\(^59\). For example Van Lier suggest that it is not always helpful to reduce the learning situation into scientific categories and that if we look, we can see the relationship between the learner as an active agent and the environment filled with potential meanings.

### 3.7 **Socio-Cultural Theory and Second Language Classroom Interaction**

In a second or a foreign language classroom SCT assigns a significant role to the interpersonal and interactive environment. In this regard one could see that in our
country, reading teachers have considerable responsibility since their duty is to create thinking beings and that is the ultimate goal of quality education and one could expect a profound change in the qualities of learner’s experience and motivation (Gillette B. 1994: 195-214)\textsuperscript{60}. In addition to that SCT attributes very significant role to instruction and certain questions emerged which are practical as far as qualities of instruction is concerned. For example, what is the role and impact of instruction? What kind of material is suitable to construct their understanding in the context? What is the role of the first language in second language learning? So it could be established that interpretive framework offered by SCT can be utilized in a foreign language classroom. So it is clear that the function of teachers is to enable and assist the performance of students in the social setup. It is the social practice and context that shapes and constructs learning.

3.7.1 ROLE AND IMPACT OF INSTRUCTIONS IN L2 CLASS

First it should be questioned whether instructions play important role in a class? Does instructions help and how? The research on second language acquisition shows that learning consists of input processing which in turn leads to internalizing abstract rules of morph-syntax. The whole process follows the route but the question regarding use of instruction is never considered in SLA research. Recently the researchers have started experimenting with particular kinds of instruction. For example, in a review of research on the latest input-based approaches to teaching grammar (Ellis R. 1999:64-80)\textsuperscript{61} describes a range of studies that attempts to clarify the role of enriched input
among theory, research and practice. In this regard, learning is perceived as directly related to society, culture, and history and the activities are considered as one unit of study. It has been observed that SCT is increasingly becoming popular and it is evident in the pedagogical literature e.g. more space is devoted to SCT in educational manuals (Lightbown.P and N.Spada 1999)\textsuperscript{62}. It is a new concept radically different from those that inform most western scientific research.

In conclusion, it is apt to remark that as Pakistani teachers and researchers we understand and interpret SCT in a proper way and apply the most important insights to our own situation and implement the rules for improving reading skills at higher levels in our institutions. In this regard we as teachers should decide ourselves how do we want to run our program in the light of research done in the class so that we can formulate our own reading model for Pakistani learners. In addition to this there are other reading models as well which are discussed in below.

3.8 READING MODELS

There are two models that need to be discussed in order to arrive at the suitable interactive reading model and the definition of reading skill. Bottom-up and Top-down approach has become a corner stone of Reading methodology. Led by Goodman’s (1970) work, the distinction between bottom-up and top-down processing can help a teacher in developing different skills in Reading.
In **bottom-up** processing, the reader must first recognize a multiplicity of linguistic signals (letters, morphemes, syllables, words, phrases, grammatical queues, discourse markers etc). As reader senses print on the retina, analyses letter features and clusters, detects and combines these into words, organizes them into sentences, and stores them with meanings. This is based on the principle that operates on the written text as hierarchically organized, which includes graphophonic, phonemic, syllabic, morphemic word and sentence levels. It means that the reader first processes the smallest linguistic unit gradually compiling the smaller units to decipher and comprehend higher units (sentence syntax). The emphasis in this approach is on text processing. Remediation is applied at the point where there may be a break-down in the hierarchical ladder. The reader's knowledge, contextual information and other high order processes are not of significance. Letters are identified by readers, the features of the letters are used as links to recognize letters, then they are combined to recognize spelling patterns and these then followed by recognition of words, sentences and paragraphs to text level processing.

**Figure 2.2 Bottom-up Approach to reading**
These data driven operations obviously require a sophisticated knowledge of the language itself. It is believed that virtually all Reading involves a risk - a guessing game in Goodman’s words.

Rayner and Pollatsek\textsuperscript{63} believe that eye fixation and encoding the printed word are the first processing stages. This is followed by the lexical access on the fixated word. Memory is the next stage, which holds the ordered or literal word it records. The syntactic parser parses strings of words into their appropriate syntactic constituents. Semantic processes occur after the syntactic process. That is why in Goodman’s words all readers must, through a puzzle solving process infer meanings, decide what to retain and move on. This is where a complementary method of processing written text is important. That brings us to another model called as the top-down model.

The \textbf{top-down model} searches for meaning. It selectively reacts to print, confirming or rejecting predictions that are made. Processing begins in the mind of the reader based on meaning driven processes. Readers identify words or letters to confirm their hypothesis about the meaning of the text. It is concept driven. It also suggests that reading is not entirely based on the bottom-up process, and meaning does not entirely depend on the text. The readers’ schemata are a part of the process since this is how they bring knowledge, experience and concepts into the text. The top-down approach uses the deep structure of a language to interpret surface structure. It is based on a hypothesis-testing model. Top-down, or conceptually driven, processing is the one in
which we draw on our own intelligence and experience to understand a text. In Pakistan, it has been observed that teachers mostly rely on bottom-up processes only and the skills which are developed are very limited. At the advanced level students are not trained in the development of higher-level skills such as evaluative and critical ability in Reading comprehension. Reading begins with Reader background knowledge.

![Figure 2.3 Top-down Approach to reading](image)

Recent research on teaching Reading has shown that a combination of top-down and bottom-up processing or what has come to be called interactive Reading is the most useful one and it is considered that this is the most appropriate model. It suggests that meaning comes from various sources and all these levels are used to process meaning and the sources are used to utilize information. Readers select the use of information from all these sources to construct meaning. In practice, a reader continually shifts from one focus to another, now adopting a top-down approach to predict probable meaning than moving to the bottom-up approach to check whether
that is really what the writer says and in Pakistan we have to take into consideration that we adopt the same strategy for our adult learners.

The integrated reading method is an effective strategy that helps to encourage and improvise reading. It requires constant evaluation by the teacher.

**Reader background knowledge**

![Diagram](image)

**Comprehension**

**Individual letters and sounds**

Figure 2.4 Interactive Approach to reading

All inputs are useful in establishing an effective strategy for a very complex physical and mental activity. The sight, sound and meaning subsist simultaneously in the reading activity. The teacher has to keep pronunciation patterns in mind and make sure that the learners look at the written word as it is pronounced orally. Pronunciation patterns require frequent repetition. It is effective to spell the words orally and present the target word in isolation and then ask students to write the word from memory.
3.9 **IMPACT OF SOCIO-CULTURAL THEORY (SCT) ON TEACHING READING IN PAKISTAN**

The cultural dimension of language teaching updates from 1986 and since then there has been a considerable growth in this field. The focus has been largely on the elaboration of conceptual models and theories; much less effort has been devoted to empirical research investigating the impact of such developments and building up a body of knowledge.

In order to promote an agenda for research in this field, one can make a distinction between research and scholarship, between investigating what is and developing what ought to be happening in teaching reading and learning. Pakistani teachers ought to investigate and find out a useful theory or model for teaching reading with the help of cognitive and socio-cultural theory.

For developing Reading skills in Pakistan, we can analyze one of the approaches in second language teaching i.e. socio-cultural approach. Socio-cultural theory is a term applied to the efforts by Vygotsky and his colleagues to formulate a psychology grounded in Marxism with an emphasis on locating the individual within collective, material, historical and social conditions (Wertsch, J, Del Rio, P and Alvarez Amelia. 1995: 7). Socio-cultural theory entails sociality to individuality, language as socially constructed rather than internally intrinsic, language as both referential and
constructive of social reality. In contrast to practice theory, socio-cultural theory, as it is applied in psychology, education and SLA focuses primarily human development and learning. Central to this approach is that human activity is mediated by material architects and by symbolic science systems. The most important of which is language. In this context, the reading material that we select is very important in the development of this vitally important skill.

With its commitment to the importance of human agency and societal context in the L2 development process, socio-cultural theory is participating in newer genres of SLA research. Representing a variety of research perspectives, one productive new focus looks specifically at the relations between language learning and social identity. In this regard an emphasis on the relations between social identity and SLA require a greater emphasis on context (Kramch.C 1995b: 83-92)\textsuperscript{65}.

Socio-cultural approaches to learning based as they are on the central notions of mediation and contractual situated ness and human action have gained some currency in SLA theorists and researcher's recent work\textsuperscript{66}.

There is a strong research tradition within sociology and linguistics, which illustrates the contextual relativity of semantic values. One has to take into consideration a radical shift within SLA, from an understanding of the language learned as context independent lexical and grammatical meaning, to an acknowledgement of language in use. Thus the following themes can be considered: the interdependences between
language and concept development, language as the principle sign system carrying socio-historical-cultural presence into the moment and language as a primary resource through which people interactively construct social reality. So we can say that socio-cultural theory mainly relies on a broadened formulation of linguistic relativism. Linguistic relativism, in its base form, is the notion that culture, mediated largely by language and communicative practices, affects the way humans think about and organize their worlds. This notion is especially pertinent to Neo-Vygotskyan approaches for the emphasis within this method on private and inner speech i.e. using the semiotic system of language as a tool for cognitive orientation. Thus we as teachers can use linguistic relativism as one of the component of SLA and can be utilized for foreign language teaching.

3.10 **UNDERSTANDING ACTION RESEARCH FOR READING TEACHERS**

Widdowson (1990) sees the need for teachers to be engaged in the active process of experimenting in their classrooms as a way of determining the practical effects of idea in action. Likewise, Widdowson (1993) has also pointed out that Action Research cannot take place without theorizing. In pursuit of that teachers need to be familiar with Second Language Acquisition (SLA) so that they can investigate the matter with the help of theories already formulated. There is a strong case of studying the
processes involved in SLA and this dissertation is written to explore the processes involved in reading skills.

As it is already mentioned at the beginning of this chapter that teacher’s research is focused on problems identified by him/her in his/her own context. In this process the teacher reflects on individual practice that helps in developing theories which are useful and meaningful for learners. To achieve that object, teachers need to be engaged in this process of conceptual evaluation in order to identify research problems.

According to Coghlan and Bdrannick point of view, (2001:7)\(^6\), the term “Action Research” is an approach that focuses on simultaneous action and research in a participative manner. Thus, Action Research is viewed as ‘insider action research’ as an agent of change.

Action Research is not a new phenomenon in the world of education. The term ‘Action Research’ was coined by Kurt Lewin, a social psychologist whose work on Action Research was developed throughout the 1940s in the United States.

Stephen Corey at Teachers College at Columbia University was among the first to use Action Research in the field of education. He believed that the scientific method in education would bring about change because educators would be involved in both the research and the application of information.
Corey believed that the value of Action Research is in the change that occurs in everyday practice rather than the generalization to a broader audience. He saw the need for teachers and researchers to work together. However, in the mid 1950s, Action Research was attacked as un-scientific.

Interest in Action Research waned over the next few years. By the 1970s, we saw again the emergence of Action Research. The practice of Action Research is again visible and seen to hold great value. Over time, the definition has taken on many meanings. It is now often seen as a tool for professional development, bringing a greater focus on the teacher than before Action Research emphasizes the involvement of teachers in problems in their own classrooms and has as its primary goal the in-service training and development of the teacher rather than the acquisition of general knowledge in the field of education.

Action Research is one of those terms that we hear quite often in today’s educational circles. But just what does it mean? If you ask three people to define Action Research, you may find yourself with three different responses.
3.10.1 **ACTION RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY**

Action Research is a reflective process that allows for inquiry and discussion as components of the "research." Action Research is a collaborative activity among colleagues searching for solutions to everyday real problems experienced in schools, or looking for ways to improve instruction and increase student achievement. Rather than dealing with the theoretical knowledge, Action Research allows practitioners to address those concerns that are closest to them, ones over which they can exhibit some influence and make change. Practitioners are responsible for making more and more decisions in the operations of schools, and they are being held publicly accountable for student achievement results. The process of Action Research assists educators in assessing needs, documenting the steps of inquiry, analyzing data, and making informed decisions that can lead to desired outcomes. Action Research involves a spiral of steps, "each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action and fact-finding about the result of the action".

The basic cycle involves the following:
In other words, the different steps in Action Research Framework may be defined as under:

Plan and Act → Observe → Reflect

Action research methodology offers a systematic approach to introducing innovations in teaching and learning. It seeks to do this by putting the teacher in the dual role of producer of educational theory, and user of that theory.
3.11 READING TEACHERS – SOME CONSIDERATIONS

While carrying out Action Research Project in teaching-learning environment, the teacher should not forget his/ her primary role that is to impart knowledge to the students or in other words the method of data collection should not be too demanding on the teacher’s time as the techniques for gathering data includes Interviews, Checklists, Portfolios, Individual files, Diaries/journals/ student-teacher interaction, questionnaires, audio and video tapes and case study.

Thus, a teacher undergoes through the following five phases of Action Research,

- Problem Identification
- Plan of Action
- Data Collection
- Analysis of Data
- Plan for Future Action

3.11.1 CRITICAL THOUGHTS FOR READING TEACHERS

Action Research has a number of further distinctive features which may be described hereunder;

- Critical collaborative enquiry.
- Reflective practitioners become Self-evaluative.
- Participative problem-solving.
• Continuing professional development.

Since the Action Research is entirely a new phenomenon for Pakistani teachers who are engaged in teaching of English as a Foreign Language, it is appropriate in the first instance to provide here some guidelines in the form how to collect data regarding the reading abilities of the students through Questionnaires and Survey Questions which are attached as Annexure-E for the guidance of the trainee-teachers and educational planners.

3.11.2 ACTION RESEARCH AND READING COMPONENTS

Action Research is the most appropriate process for reading teachers in our country to exactly diagnose the reading disabilities of the students both at the intermediate and advanced levels. This process of Action Research is all the more interesting as our teachers deal with a galaxy of students having different socio-cultural background hand in hand in touch with diverse teaching environments.

The situation in Pakistan is quite comfortable for teachers to get maximum advantages from the Action Research as it can bring to limelight different facets of teaching-learning process to further improve the teaching techniques for the greater benefit of the students to improve their learning abilities.

Since we are particularly concentrating at the moment with corrective reading, the top priority for reading teachers for corrective readings of the students would be to find out systematically where the readers suffer in reading process.
For the convenience of the reading teacher, the following considerations are recommended to enhance the reading capabilities of the disabled readers as the students may suffer from various reading disabilities such as word recognition.

Corrective reading requires motivation, concentration and good study techniques which are absolutely essential for reading teachers to inculcate among their students both at the intermediate and advanced levels. Here are some considerations for reading teachers:

- To broaden the students background knowledge through reading material from newspapers, magazines and books.
- To train Ss in quick understanding of the structure in a paragraph.
- To develop anticipation and prediction habits.
- To create motivation and interest.
- How to look for supporting cues.
- Vocabulary building.
- Use a systematic reading technique like SQR3.
- Teaching decoding skills with concentration on vocabulary understanding.
- Encouraging students to build world knowledge through reading and to relate it to their schemata.

- Teaching students to use a repertoire of active comprehension strategies,
including prediction, analyzing stories with respect to story grammar elements, question asking, image construction, and summarizing.

- Encouraging students to monitor their comprehension, noting explicitly whether decoded words make sense and whether the text itself makes sense. When problems are detected, students should know that they need to reprocess (e.g., by attempting to sound out problematic words again or re-reading).

**Reading a familiar book** – The teacher encourages the pupils to read familiar book or stories. During this process, the teacher does not focus on correcting mistakes and instead keeps a running record of student behaviour, paying particular attention to errors, self-corrections and comprehension strategies.

**Working with letters** – The teacher works to extend students letter and word knowledge. Depending on the students proficiency level, activities might include identifying and naming letters of the alphabet, matching uppercase and lowercase letters, or putting letters together to form words. At the more advanced stage, pupils write words in their work books.

**Reading a new text** – The teacher may introduce a new text. The pupil attempts to read the new text as independently as possible, with orientation and support from the teacher. The teacher can use context clues and prediction in deciphering new text.
After the student has finished reading, students and teacher will discuss the new text and the reading strategies that were used. The new text then re-read as familiar text.

English Language Teachers in Pakistan have a huge responsibility upon their shoulders to bring positive changes in their classrooms for learning-teaching phenomenon meeting the modern day demands. The major problems that are encountered by the teachers are that our learners come from different socio-cultural background having diverse cognitive abilities which is a serious challenge. Our educators and planners are required to implant a new teaching-culture in our system to enhance the learning capabilities of our students. They need to look at different facets like ‘Action Research’, ‘Metacognition’, ‘Cognition’ and ‘Affective Factors’. These components of teaching-learning process can develop our teachers as ‘Reflective Practitioners’.


42 David H. Russell, *The dynamics of Reading*, (Robert Ruddell, Editor Walthan, Mass; Ginn-Wlaisbell, 1970) 3


44 Downing, John & Thackray, *Reading Readiness*, (London University of London Press, 1971) 9


50 Tseng, Y. A lesson in culture (ELT Journal, 56 (1), 2000) 11-20


52 ibid

53 Crystal, D. The Cambridge encyclopedia of language (Cambridge University Press, 1987), 358

54 Spolsky, B. Conditions for second language learning (Oxford University Press, 1989), 28

55 Romaine, S. Bilingualism (Cambridge, Massachusetts Blackwell Publishers, 1995)
56 DeGroot, A.M.B. and Berry, C. The multilingual community bilingualism (Hillsdale; Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publisher, 1992)

57 Toulmin, S. Cosmo polis: The hidden agenda of modernity (New York: The free press, 1990)


Peirce, B.N. *Social identity, investment and language learning* (TESOL quarterly 29/1: 1995) 9-31

66 Ibid

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodology adopted by the researcher to collect and record data for the purpose of this research, together with tools of data collection and procedures. This is in line with the common perception of research as a process based on the formal, systematic application of the scientific method to the study of problems. The three components of the process are identified as (a) a thesis or proposition, (b) data collection, and (c) analysis and interpretation of data in the light of the primary proposition. A method suitable for the exigencies of the problem at hand would, ideally, lead to conclusions that are answerable to the requirements of the study. However, certain inherent difficulties with the researcher's field of study prevent the full validation of some of her findings and assumptions. One difficulty emerges from the fuzzy nature of the researcher's primary area of interest. The researcher has tried to place the matter in a psycho-social context, but the word 'society' is itself abstract and incapable of accurate delineation. The best that the researcher can do is to indicate trends, strengths, weaknesses, directions and possibilities. It might be mentioned that she had no lemmas\textsuperscript{68} to work with. Another difficulty is that no reliable literature exists for the Pakistani context with reference to
psychological and socio-cultural elements in reading skills in the second language. The researcher has mentioned whatever literature there is, to be found in Pakistan (and about Pakistan). However, she has been forced to adapt material written abroad for other societies for establishing a theoretical framework, and to rely on her own judgment at many points in this dissertation for her empirical observations about the situation in this country. Despite the difficulties noted here, the researcher has endeavored to maintain acceptable standards in the instruments of research, data collection and data analysis. For the reliability-coefficient and internal consistency of her questionnaire she first attempted to use Cronbach’s alpha\textsuperscript{69}. She abandoned the attempt because the questionnaire, which contained a variety of questions, some of which were open-ended, did not lend itself to this kind of analysis\textsuperscript{70}. The researcher feels that the questionnaire is a reasonably reliable reflection of her purposes in undertaking this study. Simple mathematical summations shown as percentages have been given for questions involving ‘opinion’ type responses. It was not possible to systematically validate the constructs underlying these questions because they were open-ended, with possibilities for multiple, uncontrolled responses that can not be quantified. Because of the indeterminacy of these responses, the researcher has not offered them as reliable data. However, they constitute an important part of her study, because the attitudes and ideas of teachers impinge very strongly on the teaching-learning cycle, and to some extent, the researcher has based her observations on the responses she obtained from those teachers involved in responding to the questionnaire, and those she interviewed as noted earlier. The questions were designed to form loose estimates of attitudes and opinions prevalent in selected areas
of the teaching world in Pakistan today (Annexure A and B). It can be taken as axiomatic that the attitudes and motivational levels of EL teachers affect student competence in learning the skills of reading. The researcher’s constructs in developing the questionnaire are as follows:

(Construct 1): students at this level do not develop adequate reading skills in the second language

(Construct 2): EL teachers at this level are largely unaware of either theory or practice in teaching English in general, and in the teaching of reading skills in the second language in particular

(Construct 3): EL teachers at this level are concerned mainly with results in examinations, and not with the development of reading skills

This study is based upon qualitative norms of research (with a few quantitative elements\textsuperscript{71} to provide stiffening). It can be further divided into descriptive and survey research. The survey research was conducted to suggest answers to the problems implied in the question why Pakistani learners at advanced secondary levels do not perform well in applying different reading skills in English. This field entails a number of factors. In the descriptive parts of the dissertation the researcher has touched upon them to the extent she thought might be useful for indicating a context for Pakistan. It was decided, therefore, to delimit the survey part of the exercise to those factors with which the researcher as a teacher of English is already familiar, and
which can be observed and controlled to some extent. The main factor has been taken into consideration, that is the teachers’ themselves. The other side of the coin is the student population, and the researcher further extended her field of enquiry to include students at the higher secondary level in selected institutions. Finally data was interpreted in percentage analysis and presented in tables and graphs for quick reference.

For this particular project the researcher adopted descriptive, exploratory approaches for the first two parts of the dissertation. She engaged in extensive library and web sites’ research on general reading theory, especially with reference to the related areas. The purpose was to develop a theoretical background for these matters, to identify key factors in the process and to see if such factors were amenable to remediation. Since she was unable to find much written material on the Pakistani context, she was forced to rely on her own powers of observations and judgment and several points in the dissertation.

For the third section of the dissertation, which is primarily descriptive, qualitative and exploratory in nature, the researcher adopted a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches\textsuperscript{72} for the controllable or partly controllable factors identified in the first two sections of the dissertation. Some support from qualitative elements was considered desirable, since there was no authoritative literature available in Pakistan about these matters.
With some ramifications, the factors identified in the first two sections were “formal teaching” and “formal learning”. The researcher took these for analysis in the third section as mentioned earlier. For her global assessment of the first factor thus identified namely “formal teaching” she asked for a limited number of teachers at the higher secondary level in the Rawalpindi and Islamabad area to answer a questionnaire, and tabulated their answers in simple mathematical percentages. Confidentiality was promised and observed for teachers who did not want to reveal their identity or the identity of the institution they were teaching in. However, some of these teachers revealed their names, as will be seen from the samples appended with this dissertation.

In addition, the researcher engaged twenty five middle level reading teachers with at least ten years’ of teaching experience (with some minor variations) in the Rawalpindi and Islamabad area in a lose, “question answer interview” and summarized and analyzed their responses. As mentioned in Chapter 5 some of the interviewees spoke in Urdu or mixture of Urdu and English, hence, the researcher had to translate their responses from Urdu to English where necessary.

4.1 **SURVEY**

The main aim of the survey was to collect data and to analyze it for the better comprehension of the problem: to investigate what socio-cultural and psychological
factors affect the performance of EL teachers and students in Pakistan generally, and the attitudes and approaches of reading skills teachers in particular. The purpose of the survey research was to create a body of evidence concerning the existing situation, to provide a basis for generalizations (if possible) based on the collected data, to understand the problem, and to make discriminating and objective observations. The questionnaire was distributed among a selected population.

4.1.1 **SURVEY SITES**

- Data was gathered from the following institutions:
  - NUML, Islamabad
  - FG Margalla College, Islamabad
  - Askaria College of Information Technology, Rawalpindi
  - Government Degree College for Women, F- Block, Rawalpindi
  - PAF Inter College Chaklala, Rawalpindi
  - FG Sir Syed College, Rawalpindi
  - Gandhara Girls College for Girls, Rawalpindi
  - Islamabad College for Boys, Islamabad
  - Muslim Academy, Rawalpindi
  - Institute of Business Administration, Islamabad.
  - Aims Education System, Rawalpindi
  - The Leaders College, Rawalpindi
• AIMS Girls Degree College, Rawalpindi
• Government Inter College Khayaban-e-Sir Syed, Rawalpindi
• Government Waqar-un-Nisa College, Rawalpindi
• Government College for Women Murree Road, Rawalpindi
• 502 Model College, Rawalpindi
• NUST, Rawalpindi
• FG Sir Syed College, Rawalpindi
• Fauji Foundation College, Rawalpindi
• Army Public School, Rawalpindi
• Govt. Gordon College, Rawalpindi
• Red Rose Public School, Rawalpindi
• Army Cadet Schools, Rawalpindi
• Ishaq Shaheed Colledge, Rawalpindi
• Riphah International University, Rawalpindi
• Jupiter Secondary School, Rawalpindi
• Hashmat Ali Islamia College, Rawalpindi
• Shining Star Academy, Rawalpindi

4.1.2 PARTICIPANTS

Most of the participants were English Language teachers, teaching reading skills (not in a formal manner) in their respective institutions and the researcher considered them
to be the most important source for this study. She elicited their opinions and responses through questionnaires and guided through largely unstructured, interviews (Annexure B).

4.4 IDENTIFICATION OF DATA

Identification of the nature of the required data was a sensitive and complex issue for the researcher. That is why she decided to use relatively unstructured interviews to supplement what she had acquired from the questionnaire. Since her approach was basically qualitative, this data consisted of opinions, observations, assumptions, attitudes and norms of a limited number of EL teachers working in the institutions as noted above, mostly in Rawalpindi, with a few in Islamabad.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

The nature of the research problem and data determines the tools to be used for the collection of data. So, researcher adapted the following methodology.

4.5.1 SAMPLING

The researcher had a large number of the target population to be investigated. A shortage of resources and time prevented her from reaching everybody concerned
with the teaching of reading skills in English, even in a small area like Rawalpindi-Islamabad, thus, she confined her efforts to a limited number of institutions as noted above. For this purpose, the researcher employed a random sampling technique. The total sample of population consisted of 63 participants from the institutions cited above. Their ideas were elicited through questionnaires, and through loosely structured interviews.

4.5.2 QUESTIONNAIRE

One separate questionnaire was prepared for EL teachers. This questionnaire was administered in a formal manner. The researcher made use of a dichotomous list of closed-ended and open-ended questions to construct the questionnaire. First of all, the questionnaires were mailed to the participants to collect their responses in an environment where the researcher was not present, so that they could give their responses objectively. The return rate of these questionnaires was not high. Most of the replies had to be collected personally, and the responses were recorded accordingly.

4.5.3 INTERVIEW

Keeping in view the low return rate of questionnaires, the researcher decided to undertake a series of interviews to countercheck the validity and reliability of the data
she had already received. Loosely structured interviews based on question frames as indicated in chapter five were used for this purpose. The researcher had to shift frequently from English to Urdu to accommodate the responses of the interviewees. These interviews took up a lot of time, but were considered useful to establish local norms and attitudes.

4.5.4 DISCUSSION

The researcher, throughout the process of data collection, continued to have discussions of an informal nature with learners, teachers, other faculty members, fellow researchers, colleagues and MA ELT students. These discussions were intended to reinforce (or modify) the researcher’s own ideas as they developed during the course of the study. They played an important role in keeping the data collection on the right track.

4.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND SCHEME OF STUDY

The scheme and composition of this dissertation were constructed round the following premises:

a. That reading theory as understood in general has some relevance to the situation in Pakistan, even if there are marked differences of context.
b. That the development of reading should not be treated in isolation, as it is influenced by a number of socio-cultural (and concomitant psychological) factors.

c. Following "b" above, that the contextual "climate" for developing reading abilities in a second language is different from that of the first language, and those salient differences should be noted for a better understanding of the factors involved.

That some of the factors identified in "b" above might be amenable to control or adaptation within the Pakistani context.

The implications of the research questions given in chapter 1 are broad. An attempt to encapsulate these implications is made here:

**4.6.1 IMPLICATIONS**

1. The questions relate to socio-cultural and psychological factors or frames of reference. The complexities of any society, advanced or backward, are endless:

   i. Even a nation's per capita income might directly or indirectly affect the development of reading in any language, first or second. Generally, the greater the availability of funds and the better they
are used for development within a given society, the better the results are likely to be. However, although the economy of the country and the utilization of resources were certainly important elements for consideration. The researcher did not feel competent to talk about them, as they lie outside her field of interest.

ii. Gross literacy figures also matter. The more literate a nation becomes, the better its approaches to the development of reading skills (in any language) are likely to be. The term "literacy" includes the skills of reading. Based on psychological transference theory (that the developed skills of the first language may, in part, be transferred to the undeveloped [or underdeveloped] skills of the second language), an assumption can be made that higher figures for "true" literacy (rather than low-level literacy) in the second language. However, the researcher only touched upon the question of literacy in chapter 5 and 6. The reason for this is that, although general literacy is an important factor, not much can be done to control or enhance it in a semi-literate environment such as that of Pakistan without a massive national effort, which is clearly beyond the researcher’s reach.

iii. A general socio-cultural and psychological climate of approval for the development of reading ability in the second language also matters. The research did not find this to be very positive among teachers she met and talked to (some of their comments are
appended with dissertation), so she has assumed that there was not much by way of intrinsic motivation for reading in English in Pakistan, and that the general socio-cultural and psychological climate was not really conducive for development of reading abilities. Added to this is the observation that there is little social backup for these skills, which then tend to fall by the way through under-usage.

iv. The teaching/learning complex also matters. This should be seen in a larger socio-cultural and psychological context for a better understanding of the problems involved. However, among the other important areas affecting the process, the researcher felt that this one might be amenable to strengthening and upgrading on both sides of the picture (teachers and students), so she exclusively focused her attention on this area for the third part of the dissertation (samples of responses are appended with this dissertation).

2. The researcher confined her observations to factors she considered relevant for her purpose and about which something could be done. Some factors are clearly beyond remediation by teachers. In general they are un-empowered, docile cogs within the administrative cycle of the country. Teachers are as much affected by these factors as other people in the society. Teachers can not do much for factors such as “per capita income”, and although they are directly concerned with education, they can not really do much for factors
such as "gross literacy rates" (see concluding remarks). However, they might be able to do something for the fourth implication noted above and for its ramification in education. Some of the related questions are:

a. What socio-cultural factors can be observed in the development of reading competence in English? [Regardless of how far the researcher has spread her study, her tacit focus for this question is the situation in Pakistan].

b. What psychological factors can be observed in the development of reading competence in English? [Regardless of how far the researcher has spread her study, her tacit focus for this question is the situation in Pakistan].

c. What can be done to improve the development of reading competence in English [the researcher's overt focus for this question is the situation in Pakistan, which the researcher further limited to one area of Pakistan i.e. Rawalpindi and Islamabad. And to one level of teaching (higher secondary) for the reasons noted below].

Based on these questions, the dissertation was conceived in three sections:

1. The first section was concerned primarily with psychological factors in the reading process. The basic tacit premise underlying this part of the study was that the development of reading in English in a non-English-speaking
milieu (such as that of Pakistan) was different from that of reading in English in an English-speaking milieu (such as that of Britain) because of larger social, cultural and psychological variations. Its tacit focal point was the Pakistani scene rather than general reading theory; but, of course, what is true for people in general is true for Pakistani masses as well, so the general reading theory was not overlooked. The effort was to identify the most important psychological factors in the development of reading in English in Pakistan. The criteria for this effort was amenability to change and controllability, on the assumption that negative factors over which there can be no control (or very little control) are not amenable to effective remediation by teachers, and thus beyond the remit of this dissertation.

2. The second section was concerned primarily with socio-cultural factors in the reading process. The basic tacit premise underlying this part of the study was the same as that articulated in "1" above, and the effort was to identify the socio-cultural factor or factors mostly likely to affect outcomes in the development of reading in English in Pakistan.

**Important note:** The second and third chapters of this dissertation are essentially exploratory and descriptive in nature. Some overlapping of socio-cultural and psychological frames of reference will be observed in both of them. This is unavoidable. The reason is that a given situation might be described as "social" but its ramifications for individuals will almost always contain psychological elements. Psychology intrudes in all manifestations of human being, overt or covert, even in
context and otherwise can be described as predominantly physical, social or cultural. Rigid compartmentalization is not possible when factors interlock, so the researcher has resorted to foregrounding and weighting rather than compartmentalization. By this she means that the first section is predominantly, though not entirely, concerned with psychological factors and the second section predominantly, does not entirely, concerned with socio-cultural ones.

3. The third section was given over to an analysis and discussion of key factors identified in the first two parts, together with findings and recommendations for improving the situation. The overt focus of this section is the situation in Pakistan, and for this the researcher adopted the methods described under the heading “methodology” given before. It will be noted that the factors thus identified “over with some level of control is possible” were related to “formal teaching and learning”, and to ramification of these factors, such as well conceived study material and class room modalities.

This chapter gives details of the procedures and tools of data collection during the course of study. The chapter presents the process of identification of the research sites, nature of data, the target population and the research tools and their administration to the participants. The chapter also mentions the techniques employed to ensure at least some measure of reliability and validity of the data collected.
The term is here used in a mathematical sense of an established proposition, rather than in a linguistic sense of a lexical item without its phonetic content. No proposition with regard to reading skills in the second language in Pakistan (established because of its general acceptance or because reliable research had already been done on it in Pakistan), was found. The researcher has used the questionnaire and question frames not only for confirming constructs, but also for generating ideas. Even so, because of the difficulty of establishing the reliability of some of the questions, especially the 'opinion-gathering' ones, she has not offered these responses as a statistically unchallengeable body of accurate opinion, but only as a brief overview of ideas garnered from some EL teachers in a limited area of Pakistan.

Cronbach’s alpha has been used as a tool for judging the reliability of questionnaires since the nineteen fifties. However, open-ended, opinion gathering questions are not amenable to validation of this nature because of the multiplicity of responses possible, and also because there is very little control over the kind, relevance and quality of responses likely to be given. For the purposes of this study, the researcher preferred this method of gathering data over questionnaires containing questions with two possible answers (Yes/No or True/False), or Lickert - type, five-point-scale questions, because of the focalizing and limiting effect of such questions, although she is aware that such questions can be analyzed and expressed more effectively in statistical terms.
See J. Reynaldo A Santos, "Cronbach's Alpha: A Tool for Assessing the Reliability of Scales" *Journal of Extension*, April 1999, Volume 37 Number 2, Internet http://www.joe.org/joe/1999april/ti3.html dated September 24 2002. Cronbach's alpha can extend in a negative direction to infinity on one side, and in a positive direction to 1.0 on the other. Santos (Ibid) points out that according to Nunnally (1978) 0.7 is acceptable, but that lower thresholds are possible for some areas of study, such as literature. This is confirmed by Nunnally, J., and Bernstein, I., *Psychometric Theory*, 3rd ed., 1994, McGraw Hill, New York, p 27 and passim. However, this scale could not be applied to the researcher's questionnaire for the reasons noted in end-notes 1 and 2 above.

This is in accordance with the recommendations of writers like Strauss, A., and Corbin, J., *Basics of Qualitative Research*, 2nd ed., Sage, London, p 27
CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the presentation and interpretation of the data collected from different sources through the tools mentioned in the previous chapter. The nature of the data did not demand any complicated statistical formula for the analysis of data collected but researcher used percentage analysis. The data thus was analyzed and interpreted by tabulation. For the purpose of imparting clarity the results were drawn in the form of graphs and tables. The numerical values of the responses to the questionnaire were quite easy to interpret in the end. Out of 100 questionnaires distributed only 38 were received. Most of the questionnaire recipients showed very little or no interest in responding.

The researcher conducted the study: (Annexure A)
institutions in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. She is aware that a limited survey in two urban areas such as this one might not be a true representation of practices in other parts of the country. She assumes, however, that standards in other regions of the country are not likely to be much different, and in fact might be worse, than those found in these two cities. No effort was made to elicit responses from teachers in rural areas. Islamabad has a fairly sophisticated educational set-up, comparable, perhaps, with those found in older cities such as Karachi and Lahore. It may be taken as representative of upper class and upper-middle class attitudes and expectations. Rawalpindi may be taken as representative of middle class and lower-middle class sensibilities and attitudes with regard to education.

As mentioned earlier, out of one hundred instruments distributed, thirty-eight were returned. These are numbered 1 to 38 and two are appended with this thesis for quick reference (Annex A).

In addition to this, the researcher asked some of her students to write what they thought about the teaching of Reading skills in primary and secondary institutions. These were free writing assignments, and no effort was made to canalize or guide the thoughts of the students. Twenty were chosen at random. These are numbered 1 to 20, and two are appended with this thesis for quick reference (Annexure C).
The formal questionnaire documented at Annexure A was designed to elicit teachers’ responses with regard to knowledge, attitudes and practices. To a great extent her suspicions and pre-judgments with regard to real teaching practices were confirmed. In many cases her expectations, especially with regard to the quantity, quality and relevance of translation used, were exceeded. With regard to quantity, the figures quoted show a range of about ten per cent on one side to a hundred per cent on the other.

The questionnaires filled in by the teachers were then quantified depending on the question.

5.1 **ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Question 1:**

1. Sequence the following English language skills in terms of importance, keeping in mind the needs of college students in Pakistan. (Kindly write a number against each skill, if all are equally important, please say so)

   a. Listening  □
   b. Speaking □
   c. Reading □
   d. Writing □

In response to question one 24% teachers’ responses were in favour of reading skill as in 3rd preference as it is in its natural order. But they have not shown the importance
of reading skills in second language learning in Pakistani context. Their negligence in this regard identifies the teaching practice, and attitude towards teaching reading skills. Following table and graphs represent the responses for readers' better understanding.

Table 1

**Importance of Language Skills for Pakistani Students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Skills</th>
<th>1st Preference Responses in %</th>
<th>2nd Preference Responses in %</th>
<th>3rd Preference Responses in %</th>
<th>4th Preference Responses in %</th>
<th>No Responses Responses in %</th>
<th>Equal Preference Responses in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>10 26%</td>
<td>3 8%</td>
<td>13 34%</td>
<td>6 16%</td>
<td>1 3%</td>
<td>5 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>10 26%</td>
<td>6 16%</td>
<td>6 16%</td>
<td>10 26%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>9 24%</td>
<td>11 29%</td>
<td>9 24%</td>
<td>3 8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>4 11%</td>
<td>12 32%</td>
<td>5 13%</td>
<td>11 29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>33 87%</td>
<td>32 84%</td>
<td>33 87%</td>
<td>30 79%</td>
<td>1 3%</td>
<td>5 13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Listening Preference](image)

**Fig.1a. Listening Preferences**
Fig. 1b. Speaking Preferences

Fig. 1c. Reading Preferences
Fig. 1d. Writing Preferences

**Question 2:**

2. Do you think reading is taught properly in your institution?
   
   a. Yes    b. No    c. could be improved

In response to question two 32% teachers showed their satisfaction level with the teaching of reading in Pakistan while 68% were not satisfied (see table 2 and graph 5). The answers have shown their dissatisfaction which clearly indicates that in Pakistan we need to improve the situation and should consider the measures which could be taken for better results.

Table 2

**Current Situation of teaching reading skills in Pakistan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Situation of Teaching reading skills in Pakistan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' Responses/Satisfaction about Reading techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Could be Improved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 2. Current situation of teaching reading skills in Pakistan

Questions:

3. How is intensive reading taught in your institution? Write a short note.

4. How is extensive reading taught in your institution? Write a short note.

6. Is any attempt made to improve the basic skills of reading? (Whole-phase, scanning, silent reading, speed reading, guessing the meanings of words from context, guessing probable words in an incomplete text, etc).

7. Are any inference-type questions asked?
   a. Yes ☐    b. No ☐

The responses to the above-mentioned questions, the percentage clearly defines that the majority of the teachers are not using different strategies needed for a successful understanding of text. The results reinforce the researcher's assumptions that English language teaching and learning is not geared in the light of recent approaches and
classroom practice is quite disappointing in effect we have immature readers at advanced level.

Table 3

Teaching Methodology for Intensive Reading Skill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Known</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known but not followed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig.3. Teaching Methodology for Intensive Reading Skill
Question 4:

Table 4

Teaching Methodology for extensive Reading Skill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Known</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known but not followed</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only advice</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 7. Teaching Methodology for extensive Reading Skill
Question 6:

Table 6

Use of strategies for the Improvement of Reading Skill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole-phase Scanning</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Reading</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed Reading</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guessing the Meaning of Words from Context</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guessing Probable Words in an incomplete Text</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All the techniques</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No techniques</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 9. Use of strategies for the Improvement of Reading Skill
Question 7:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy of Inference</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6  Strategy of Inference

Fig. 10. Strategy of Inference

Questions:

15. What do you understand by ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ reading? Explain briefly.

17. Are the following kinds of exercises encouraged? Please check any or all of the following if applicable.

a. Pre-reading (anticipatory questions) □
b. In-reading (continuous referencing) □
c. Post-reading (comprehension of the text) □

18. Do you follow a 'whole to parts' or a 'part to whole' approach?

Teachers' knowledge about the process involved in reading is disappointing. Answer to the questions reveal that majority of teachers do not know what entails reading. If someone has tried to answer the question their concepts are vague. Those respondents who knew it well could not apply the theory due to certain constraints. Again the assumptions that either teachers are ignorant or they are not able to apply their knowledge in practical situations have been proved.

Table 15: Teachers Knowledge about Reading Models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right Concept</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong Concept</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig.11 Teachers Knowledge about Reading Models
Question 16:

Table 16

Teachers Knowledge about 'Middle-Across' Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right Concept</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong Concept</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 12 Teachers Knowledge about 'Middle-Across' Reading
### Question 17

**Table 17**

Teachers Knowledge about 'Middle-Across' Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right Concept</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrong Concept</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Question 18: Do you follow a 'whole to parts' or a 'part to whole' approach?

**Table 18** Teachers’ understanding of Reading Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W.P.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.W.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Followed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 14 Understanding about Reading Process
The representatives have not been able to answer the question correctly. Their ignorance regarding the basic concepts is revealed here. This can be used as a proof that the poor teaching practice are the result of lack of knowledge.

**Question 5:** Approximately how much time per week is spent in the teaching of reading?

**Table 5**

Time Allocation for Teaching of Reading Skill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time per Week</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Time</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 1 to 5 hrs.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 10 to 15 hrs.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 40 to 50 hrs.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig.15. Time Allocation for Teaching of Reading Skill
In response to question 5 the respondents have answered the question for the teaching of English because reading skills is a part of English as such. But the feedback is that mostly reading and study skills are not taught separately.

**Question 8:** How much Urdu (or regional language) is used in explaining English texts?

Mother tongue is being used while teaching reading by majority of the teachers 68%. The facts clearly indicate teachers are not using the recent approaches to teaching reading skills and principles of grammar translation method are being applied while teaching. The results have clearly revealed that mostly the techniques for better comprehension of text are not employed. Our learners are not trained to work by themselves.

**Table 8:** Use of MT in teaching reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No responses</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 11. Use of MT in Reading.
**Question 9 +14:** Is any kind of dictionary used?

a. Yes ☐  b. No ☐

Majority answered in positive but the answer to q no. 10 revealed, they heavily relayed on by lingual dictionary and they arc satisfied by that practice. This shows the students inability to comprehend the text effectively since translation does not fully help in comprehension. It is said that language works in context and there are other factors that play vital role in decoding a text in second language.

Table 9

Use of Dictionary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Responses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Graph of Use of Dictionary](image)

**Fig. 12. Use of Dictionary**
Question 10: If answer to No. 9 is “yes”, what kind of dictionary is used?

a. Monolingual (with defining vocabulary)  
   □

b. Monolingual (without a defining vocabulary)  
   □

c. Monolingual (with phonetic symbols for pronunciation)  
   □

d. Bilingual  
   □

Table 10: Kinds of Dictionaries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinds of Dictionaries</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monolingual (with defining Vocabulary)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monolingual (without defining Vocabulary)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monolingual (with Phonetic Symbols for pronunciation)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Responses</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 13. Kinds of Dictionaries
Question 11 +12: If the answer to No.10 is ‘a’ or ‘b’, give reasons for using a monolingual dictionary

Majority has not responded to the question. It clearly shows teacher’s ignorance and understanding of the concept.

Table 11

Reasons for Monolingual Dictionary Usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Responses</th>
<th>Teachers’ Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers’ Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Responses</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lang. can’t be translated</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literal and figurative meaning</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary building</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig.14 Reasons for Monolingual Dictionary Usage
Question 12: If the answer to No. 10 is ‘c’, why is the pronunciation considered to be important? Write a short note

Table 12

Reasons for Phonetic Dictionary Usage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Responses</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.P. Standard</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligibility</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For vocabulary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Skill</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 15 Reasons for Phonetic Dictionary Usage

Question 13: If the answer to No. 10 is ‘d’, are you satisfied with the dictionary?

a. Yes ☐  b. No ☐
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Responses</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 16 Satisfaction Level of Teachers while Using Bilingual Dictionary

**Question 14:** Is any attempt made to instruct students in using a dictionary?

- a. Yes □
- b. No □
Table 14: Using Dictionary as Study Technique

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in Figures</td>
<td>in Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Responses</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Using Dictionary as Study Technique](image)

Fig. 17 Using Dictionary as Study Technique

**Question 19:** Do you use reading for the development of any other language skill?

a. Yes □  b. No □

Table 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of Reading for the Development of other Language Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers' Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use of Reading for the Development of other Language Skills

Fig. 22 Use of Reading for the Development of other Language Skills

**Question 20+21**: As a teacher do you think your primary job is to:

a. Explain the text to students

b. Encourage your students to understand the text through their own efforts

Table 20

**Teacher's Approach to reading skill and classroom practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Responses</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher guidance</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not teacher guidance available</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 23 Teacher's Approach to Reading Skill and Classroom Practice

**Question 21:** Are you satisfied with the results of your efforts?

**Table 21**

Results of Teacher's Approach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 24 Results of Teacher's Approach

**Question 22:**

Table 22

Effects of Socio-cultural Factors in Reading Comprehension

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Responses</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Figures</th>
<th>Teachers' Responses in Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Responses</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Fig. 25. Effects of Socio-cultural Factors in Reading Comprehension

5.2 ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS

INTERVIEWS - GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

A total of twenty-five interviews were held and transcribed (as examples of the kind of questions asked, answers given and analyses made, two of these, one from each of the experience groups mentioned later, are appended with this thesis as Annex B).
Some respondents spoke almost entirely in Urdu, or in a frequently changing, random mixture of Urdu and English. The researcher has rendered their responses in English.

Seven of the teachers interviewed were based in institutions in Rawalpindi and the remaining eighteen in Islamabad. As represented in following table:

Table 23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Participants’ Area</th>
<th>Rawalpindi</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
<th>Islamabad</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The answers were analyzed paragraph by paragraph to generate possibilities and ideas in the manner recommended for qualitative studies. For the convenience of the researcher, the questions were grouped in blocks related to different aspects of her research. The researcher’s comments and observations are shown in the next section.

The researcher realizes that a small sampling such as this, confined as it was to a small area of Pakistan, would probably not yield defensible results for the nation as a whole. However, the interviewees were selected as representative of mid-level teachers actually engaged in ELT teaching in different institutions in Rawalpindi and Islamabad, and it is believed that to a considerable extent they could be taken as reflective of conditions in the country in general.
Levels were fixed arbitrarily and mainly with teachers having ten to twenty years of teaching experience. As presented in following table:

Table 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Experiences of the Participants</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A little flexibility at the limits of the range was allowed. Apart from two teachers in Rawalpindi who exceeded the upper limit by margins of one year and three years, all those selected fitted into this range. Of the remaining, thirteen had the mean number of years of experience (from fourteen to sixteen), four had from seventeen to twenty years, and six had from ten to thirteen. These groupings were fixed arbitrarily, after the interviews had been taken. This was because (although the interviews were taken individually) teachers at the lower end tended to agree with one another, and some conformity was also observed among teachers at the middle and higher ends, indicating the possibility of forming loose groupings based on experience.

It will be noted that only years of experience were counted. The correspondence between age and experience was not very close, as some of the respondents had started teaching much later than others. Nineteen of the twenty-five respondents were
women. The considerable differentials observed between chronological age and professional experience could be attributed to the encroachment of familial and socio-cultural pressures on their professional life. These same constraints might also affect their willingness to learn and apply new things.

With most women in Pakistan, especially married women, teaching is taken up not as a full profession but as a part-time necessity and/or time passing.

Table 25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Analysis of Participants</th>
<th>Unmarried</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
<th>Married</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unmarried women teachers seem mostly to be waiting to get married, so once again their primary focus is not on their profession but on socio-cultural aspects of their life. It is valued not as an end in itself, but either as a supplementary source of income for the family or as a part-time activity until their real aims is fulfilled. Even if women are appointed to full-time positions, they tend to give their jobs the minimum possible attention and are often distressed and impatient if more time than they are required to give is demanded of them. The general range of psychological motivation among women teachers tends to be from low to medium-low.
Table 26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological Motivational Level</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviews included six men, mostly in the lower experience group. All six stated that they had applied unsuccessfully for other jobs, mostly in the civil services of the country. This indicates a general avoidance of this profession by men, who think of teaching as a steppingstone to other things if they are already teachers, or as a ‘last resort’ job to be considered only if they fail elsewhere. It indicates, also, a set of negative social pressures on men with regard to this profession. Men are expected to be decision-makers and at positions of authority, this expectation is not met in this profession. The impression one gets is that most men would prefer to be in ‘proper’ jobs as defined by this society for men (perhaps as government administrators or police officers, even if the pay scales are no better). This in part explains why their motivation towards teaching remains low, and why men are more likely than women to become impatient, off-hand and authoritarian in their attitudes towards students.

While familial and social motivation for teaching is low for both women and men, in general the researcher finds women to be psychologically somewhat better adjusted than men to the teaching profession as it is conceived in Pakistan, partly because the culture of this society accords some degree of acceptance to this profession for
women. Similar acceptance might be found for nursing or medicine, but probably not for driving heavy vehicles or flying commercial airplanes. This, of course, is the researcher’s personal generalization, for which she has nothing but her own observation to go on. One can talk about the desirability of intrinsic psychological motivation, which, if reinforced by compatible social factors, sometimes transcends extrinsic impediments. However, intrinsic motivation can often be killed (or at least diluted or weakened) by incompatible social factors, and its strength or weakness can tip the scales towards good teaching or bad, regardless of the general intelligence or academic competence of the teacher involved. Occasionally, rather very occasionally, one comes across a male teacher ‘by choice’, a man who has had other options in life but who has taken up teaching because he wants to, motivated by intrinsic idealism that transcends extrinsic factors. However, no such man appeared among the male teachers interviewed in this random survey. Most of them were cynical or openly hostile to the profession, and the researcher hazards the opinion that such a man is rare indeed in this society. Teaching is called a ‘noble’ profession by those who do not wish to pay anything to the teacher for the crucial role he has in the upbringing of their children, forgetting that he also has a life to live and dependents to support. It is easy to understand why this kind of undervalued nobility takes third, fifth or tenth place in the average Pakistani man’s scale of professional values.

This does not mean that women are always or even usually better teachers than men, but it does argue for selecting teachers on principles not evidenced in the rather mechanical procedures used now, which focus too much on quantifiable things like
examination grades, numbers of publications, numbers of research papers or years of experience, and not enough on things like flair and motivation. This is because some factors (such as examination grades or numbers of research publications) are commensurable and therefore defensible, while others (such as motivation) are not, and therefore tend to be ignored. They should not be ignored, because an appreciable percentage of the whole effort might rest on incommensurable factors. In fact, these might be the make or break factors in the process. If the teacher feels that what she does is important, that her choice has the approval of society and that it generates enough for her to live on with reasonable dignity, she might be motivated to do her job better. The researcher has used the feminine pronoun because women tend to dominate the teaching scene. However, it is easy to see that the same factors would operate for men as well.

Psychologically, the mechanical approach to selection and service prospects can be damaging. It tends to wash out and neutralize creativity and intrinsic motivation, the idealism that does, or should, inform the profession if it is to be pursued for the benefit of students. In general, the socio-cultural aura for teaching in Pakistan is negative, and the result is that this profession tends to become a ‘last resort’ not for those who fail to find a niche for themselves in other professions. This observation is more pertinent for men than for women. Male teachers readily abandon teaching if at a later stage they manage to get jobs in other sectors, the researcher can personally identify a number of people who have switched from teaching to other professions.
The researcher has also observed that even in her own university a number teachers male and female work in both shifts (morning and evening), others, who are not doing so most of them are mostly providing teaching services privately. It is also observed that a considerable number of teachers do other jobs not related to teaching for their living. Despite the teacher's basic and pivotal importance in the development of a nation, he finds that he has a lowly, underpaid, powerless and underprivileged status in this society. When he/she compares him/herself with his peers (many of whom he exceeds in scholarship or levels of education), it comes as no surprise that teaching is not a popular profession, especially among men.

No attempt was made to differentiate between teachers in private or public institutions, or between male and female teachers beyond the observations made above. The sampling thus had representatives (in terms of experience only) from both the lower and upper ends of the limits prescribed, with a large concentration in the middle. A lot of similarity was noticed in the responses emerging from a survey even as small as this one, so extrapolations to other urban areas of the nation at large would probably contain an appreciable quantum of validity.

The reader will note the use of expressions such as 'arbitrarily' 'a lot of' and 'probably' in previous statements. The researcher feels instinctively that the assumptions made here are valid, but she has not attempted to confirm or deny them through wide-ranging empirical surveys. She offers them only as tentative
assumptions based on personal experience, analyses of respondent’s statements, primary and secondary observations of their behavior, introspection, intuition and observation.

Mid-level teachers were selected in preference to very senior or very junior teachers. Older teachers (fifty plus) tend to become set in their ways, not because they are by definition less flexible than younger ones, but because of a kind of ‘idealism fatigue’ resulting from the sustained compromises they are forced to make with the imperatives of their jobs and the generally deadening, de-motivating system within which they work. This ultimately leads to the perpetuation of comfortable procedures in preference to exploratory ones. On the other hand new entrants to the teaching profession, while they might be more idealistic and adventurous, tend not to be aware of psycho/socio/cultural factors in education. The specific reference is to the development of Reading skills. At best, if they have any awareness of these things, it is as yet bookish and untested.

Knowledge derived from textbooks (most of which are written by foreigners) might or might not be valid for conditions in Pakistan. However, beyond a few general remarks found at various points in the ensuing work, no attempt is made in this thesis to judge the socio-cultural validity or acceptability of foreign books in the Pakistani context. This forms an important area of research in the reading process, but it lies outside the scope of this study.
Description of General Qualitative Analysis with supportive Quantitative elements made by the researcher of responses given by twenty-five interviewees:

**Note:** quantitative elements have been quoted in simple numbers.

### 5.2.1 PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS

**Block 1.**

The term ‘psychology’ refers to a very wide range of interests, and includes behavioral, cognitive, emotional, pedagogical, familial, intra-relational and inter-relational features of individual and corporate living. One major concern of this dissertation is the psychology of second language learning, with special reference to the skills of Reading. The researcher prefers to call English a second rather than a foreign language because it has a strong and continually growing presence in this society, at least for Reading and writing, if not for listening and speaking.

Table 27

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Abilities of participants</th>
<th>Right concept</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
<th>Wrong Concept</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language vs Second Language</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about Language Skills</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observations: (a) Sixteen of the twenty-five respondents took umbrage at the definition of English as a second rather than a foreign language, but none of them was clear as to what constituted a second language. Four suggested that there was no need to differentiate between a second or foreign language and that English was obviously 'foreign' in that it had its origins abroad. (b) More than half of the interviewees, thirteen in number, were puzzled by the researcher's premise that language skills could be isolated and identified separately, and seemed to be hearing about the four skills of language for the first time. The researcher has used the word 'seemed' because, although there no verbal admissions of ignorance, there were non-verbal clues in abundance. (c) Many were not aware that they were using a heavy mixture of local languages (mostly Urdu) in their English during the interview.

Table 28

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>English Figures in %</th>
<th>Urdu</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
<th>Code switching</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The researcher used English and English only for the interview. However, nine of the respondents spoke primarily in Urdu with a heavy mixture of English words and phrases. One respondent spoke determinedly in Urdu throughout the interview, though with an unconscious and comparatively light mixture of English
words and phrases. Although she was a teacher of English, this respondent was generally hostile to English. (d) Code-mixing is an oracy phenomenon rather than a literacy one and is common among educated people in Pakistan, including teachers of English. Until people are made conscious of it, it tends to pass unnoticed in ordinary conversational exchanges. (e) When the researcher suggested that they might be using the same mode of communication in the classroom, fourteen responded that they (occasionally to frequently) used Urdu for explaining things to students, and only four admitted to using Urdu as their primary vehicle of communication. Until the researcher drew attention to the fact, none seemed to be aware that he or she used a mixed code for normal communication either in the classroom, or outside it when interacting with students. (f) The researcher’s observation is that a lot of people, including teachers and students, mix their language codes without being aware of it. When Pakistanis interact with other Pakistanis, the use of English seems artificial so there is a tendency to slip into Urdu or some Pakistani language, either entirely or in some random mixing formula (See table). The effect of this kind of communication on students both in the classroom and outside it in day-to-day interaction needs to be studied in detail, as it affects acquisitions in the second language. However, being more of an oral phenomenon than a Reading/writing one, it falls outside the scope of this thesis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Tongue</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Block 2**

The general term ‘psychology’ would need to take cognizance of socio-cultural factors as well. Since these factors impinge (sometimes decisively) on the performance, aptitudes and attitudes of second-language teachers and learners. It is possible to view an individual as an individual only up to a point. The social perspective cannot be ignored. A fairly broad perspective has to be maintained in studies of this nature, otherwise the thing tends to become unrepresentative. A very large matrix of interlocking (and often mutually neutralizing) factors comes into view when the matter is viewed steadily. A strict segregation of factors is not possible. It is desirable to identify the key conditions and functions in the two areas of psychology and sociology, with a continuous bias towards questions related to language learning.
Observations: all colleagues, twenty-five in number, agreed with the observation that social conditions needed to be explored and understood with reference to language teaching. Some of them, fourteen in number, spontaneously enlarged upon the idea and suggested that much more work was required in understanding local needs and constraints. All twenty-five of them felt that social and educational conditions were unduly restrictive. The researcher also got the impression, admittedly on non-verbal clues rather than on specific statements, that most of these teachers were happy to shift blame on to social conditions for their own unsatisfactory performance. Following table represents the above-mentioned theme.

Table 30

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Having background knowledge for L2 text</th>
<th>Right Concept</th>
<th>Figure in %</th>
<th>Wrong Concept</th>
<th>Figure in %</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Figure in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparing learners according to their needs and constraints</th>
<th>Right Concept</th>
<th>Figure in %</th>
<th>Wrong Concept</th>
<th>Figure in %</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Figure in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Block 3

The researcher takes it as axiomatic that foreign or second language learning is invariably assayed in an environment that is socially, linguistically and culturally different from that in which first language
learning takes place, and that the motivation behind learning the second language is different from that of the first language.

**Observations**: these axioms emerge from Number 2, however, some colleagues, eight in number, had obviously never bothered to think about these things, and seemed puzzled that a new dimension should be added to the process of developing second language skills, especially when so much thinking and theorizing had gone into ELT practices elsewhere in the world. One respondent suggested that this whole exercise was irrelevant, a kind of 'reinventing the wheel', and that Pakistan was not so different from other countries that detailed studies of this nature needed to be mounted here.

**Block 3(a)**

The difference is exacerbated in direct proportion to the physical distance involved, and to the relative strangeness of cultural factors operating in the respective societies. Briefly, learning to read in English is not (and cannot be) the same as learning to read in English in Britain, America or Australia. This statement is equally true of learning to listen, speak or write in English, but the primary focus here is on Reading skills.

**Observations**: (a) most respondents, nineteen in number, agreed with the idea of putting the matter into a social context and (b) also with trying to understand
Pakistani needs and constraints. This figure included **eighteen** women and **one** man, but the researcher is at a loss to explain this gender ratio. **Five** men had no comment to offer at all. **One** woman thought this approach would only cloud the issue and not clarify it. (This teacher's responses together with another by a male teacher are appended for quick reference with the dissertation as Annex C). Generally, this respondent was impatient with the whole exercise (see **Block 3** above). She felt that the job of the teacher was to get on with the business of teaching and not to waste time in speculation of this nature. She was a fairly senior teacher of English, but she used a great deal of Urdu in her comments and tended to disagree with some assumptions of the exercise. She disagreed with the premise that English was necessary for Pakistanis or that more effort should be put into developing true second language ability at the national level. However, she was only one of twenty-five respondents. (e) As mentioned in **Block 1** above, some respondents were puzzled by the idea of segregating language skills. **Nineteen** asserted that the skills were inseparable and that the 'integrated' approach was desirable for the parallel development of all the language skills, including bi-lingual and two-way translation. (d) **One** thought that translation was the primary skill, as students mostly read English texts for the extraction of information, and not for other purposes, but changed her mind as the interview progressed. (e) **Thirteen** asserted that writing emerged as a natural consequence of Reading (and likewise speaking of listening)) and that one skill helped to activate another. (f) Numerically, the response indicates a general disagreement with some of the researcher's assumptions with regard to viewing language skills separately. Despite this, the researcher feels that her basic
assumptions have been broadly validated. Most of the teachers involved in this survey had no previous inkling of these questions. They did not admit their ignorance, but it was clear that these approaches were new for them, or, at least, for most of them. After the initial reaction (which tended to be a rejection) most of them seemed to fall into a loose pattern of agreement with the researcher’s assumptions, although she did not try to persuade any of them. (g) However, at this stage the researcher will not go into the pros and cons of ‘integrated’ or ‘segregated’ approaches to language teaching beyond the basic observation, which is there for anybody to see, that English is used very little for purposes of oral communication anywhere in the country, but that it is used extensively for Reading, writing, planning and accounting in a number of social functions at all levels from small-scale trading to high-level education and governance. (h) regardless of what respondents thought about these matters, there is little doubt in the researcher’s mind that by a process of elimination over the last century and a half, this society has settled on the literacy skills in English (and on Reading much more than on writing) in preference to the oral ones. She has enlarged on this observation at other places in the dissertation. The skills of language are indubitably interlinked. Even so, one finds that most Pakistanis are orate in the national or a regional language without developing parallel skills in Reading and writing, so it is possible to ‘know’ a language without a parallel mastery of all of its skills. While for a few Pakistanis, those, say, engaged in aviation, teaching, commerce, international trade, banking, or international diplomacy, the skills of listening and speaking are certainly of great import, for the vast majority these skills are relatively unimportant because
they are never or hardly ever used. It is difficult to anticipate future needs and trends. Factors such as globalization, electronic links, internationalism and the imperatives generated by increasing mobility and exposure to trade and events in the world at large might demand progressive revision and a careful reordering of language skills quite soon, perhaps in the next fifteen or twenty years. **However, Reading in English comes out as the most important skill for young Pakistanis living in this society at this stage in its history.** This observation is probably true for the near and foreseeable future as well.

**Block 4**

The researcher hazards the opinion that while other skills might need to be strengthened in years to come, Reading will remain the primary skill as long as this society uses English, and that at no stage will it recede into the background as a relatively unused, unimportant skill. She also cautiously predicts that more and more English in all of its manifestations both spoken and written will be needed before long. If this prediction comes true, a far greater effort than is seen now will have to be made for teaching this language in the country, as each language skill demands a conscious understanding of its functions and limitations and a corresponding focus in Reading.

**Observations:** (a) there are predictive and futuristic elements in this statement, which make it hypothetical and speculative. Few (four) of the interviewees indicated
that they had ever thought about these matters, and there was a general tendency to reject the idea of isolating the skills of language. This response was largely instinctive, and not the product of any kind of prior speculation about these things. **It should be pointed out that at no point did the researcher indicate that other language skills should be eliminated.** The researcher struggled against a persistent tendency on the part of respondents to swing to extremes in their comprehension of these matters. What she did was to suggest that the literacy skills be given primacy in the national teaching effort, with special foregrounding for the Reading skills. (b) Many, **nineteen in number**, seemed puzzled by this way of looking at a language, although they did not admit their ignorance in so many words. However, as the interview progressed they seemed to become more and more attuned to these ideas. (c) Only **four** unequivocally endorsed the idea that Reading was the primary skill for Pakistani students in the present scenario and that it would continue to be so in the near future. **Fourteen** indicated that it was difficult to say anything about the future, but these respondents were otherwise in general agreement with the implications of the statement. (d) Only **seven** had any kind of comment to make about increasing the teaching effort in the country as other skills became more and more important. The researcher’s impression is that no respondent had thought about these matters or was truly aware of their implications. She encountered the whole gamut of defensive postures, from excuse-giving and non-admission of ignorance on one side to indifference and aggressive denial on the other. As shown in following table: Table 31
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Figures in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading as Primary skill</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading as a Secondary Skill</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reader is referred to **Annexure C** for representative examples of these interviews.

The researcher’s own work experience relates to Readings in language and literature, and, while it is not strictly confined to these areas, her professional contact with works of science and technology is relatively superficial and sporadic. She has therefore delimited her field of enquiry to areas with which she is familiar in a professional sense. Her interviews were with teachers similarly employed in language teaching, though at a somewhat lower pedagogical level.

Reading in the empirical sciences is probably different from Reading in the humanities or social sciences, but the limited scope of this thesis precludes any kind of assertion or denial of these differences. **With books of pure science, mathematics or technology, psychological and socio-cultural factors may be relatively unimportant**, because this kind of knowledge supposedly transcends psychological or socio-cultural considerations. At the same time it should not be discounted entirely, because even if the knowledge contained in such books is relatively non-cultural, the fact remains that many Pakistani students grow up in a marginally scientific,
marginally technological milieu, which might or might not be conducive to the acquisition of scientific, mathematical or technological knowledge. In other words, socio-cultural elements cannot be ignored. They affect performance, regardless of the cultural content of the subject matter. The researcher will concentrate on areas with which she is familiar, namely Readings in the humanities and social sciences.

It is unlikely that a culture of science will take root and flourish in a non-scientific or marginally scientific environment such as that of Pakistan. Even strict science has a cultural base. It is observed that an overwhelming percentage of scientific writing in the world today emerges from technologically advanced cultures that give a lot of importance to maintaining modern, well developed institutions for research and experimentation, while very little of this kind of writing comes from uninventive, technologically backward cultures of the world, among which Pakistan will have to be counted as well.

When it comes to questions of culture, some areas are fairly universal and thus do not need to be tested empirically, some areas though different might not make much difference to the Reading process and may therefore be ignored, but some might be different enough to become significant in teacher and student performance. These areas form the loose focus of this work.
It will be appreciated that the hypotheses involved in this kind of work are generally fuzzy and as such are not amenable to exact delineation. Despite attempts to quantify these processes through exercises like ‘readability’ analyses, it is not possible to exactly measure ‘Reading levels’, for example, or to determine degrees of ‘Reading ability’ or “scientific approach” in a given society, nor is it possible to assert that so and so factors inevitably or invariably have such and such effects on teachers or students. Ancient Greek society was technologically backward, yet it was able to throw up a large number of seminally important thinkers. But, until we can say with certainty that such and such factors were prevalent at that time (which we cannot do), it is better to suspend judgment than to assert causal, environmental relationships between societal or psychological factors in an attempt to explain the appearance of people like Aristotle or Plato, or indeed, of Socrates, Heraclites, Zeno, Pythagoras, Archimedes and a host of others.

The researcher has undertaken this study in the belief that the foregoing caveat, which is certainly valid for little known past ages and times, is either not valid or only partially valid for the present, and that it is a valid exercise to look at psychological and socio-cultural elements while discussing these matters. In any case the focus is not on exceptional individuals. A multiplicity of primary, secondary and intervening factors, mostly of a psychological or sociological nature, is involved in teaching language skills to students. Physical factors such as environment, comfort, good arrangements for the supply of water and power, adequate transport facilities and
enough money to live on, certainly matter, and have a psychological effect on teacher and student motivation and performance, but these factors are not considered in this thesis.

The foregoing generalizations about teachers at different levels of experience are the researcher's own observations, and are not supported by independent surveys. She is aware that work experience is only one of several factors that might operate in the making of attitudes. However, she is forced to rely on her own judgment in these matters, because she has not come across anything by way of definitive commentary on psychological or sociological conditions in the country. To some extent her observations are supported by the results of these interviews, but she realizes that they are challengeable. The findings given in the next section are not offered as evidential proof of anything, only as indicators of possibilities and trends. A great deal more is needed by way of studies on conditions in this country for better insights into these matters. The researcher hopes that some directions will emerge from this modest attempt.

Rural areas have not been touched, because conditions with regard to the use and need of English are visibly different in the village environment of the country. These conditions change progressively as villages become larger, more complex and more town-like. A quick ride through villages such as Fateh Jang (as an example of a relatively underdeveloped village ethos) and Lehtar and Barakao (as examples of recent growth and urbanization) near and around the twin cities of Islamabad and
Rawalpindi, reveals that while written forms of English (which would subsume parallel needs in Reading) are sometimes used for banking, accounting, signboards or receipts for business transactions (receipts are often printed in English, but Urdu is usually employed for recording transactions) English is not much in evidence anywhere. Oral forms of the language are hardly encountered at all except unconsciously in the use of English words absorbed and indigenized in the local languages. It is reiterated here that while a comprehensive series of surveys of conditions in villages and other urban centers is certainly required; this has not been attempted in this study.

To reduce inhibitions, confidentiality was promised and preserved. The purpose of this limited exercise was not to make an exhaustive survey of attitudes and practices in the country, but to establish a small representative base as a starting point for some ideas discussed generally throughout this thesis.

Next chapter will deal with the general discussions and recommendations in the light of the research findings presented in this chapter.
CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The concluding part of this thesis is based upon the general observation generated by the whole exercise done before. The data collected through personal observation, questionnaires, interviews, and student’s inventories clearly show that Pakistani learners are immature readers and they are functionally illiterate. In this regard, this chapter highlights some of the problems of Pakistani learners in English language teaching in general and reading skills in particular. In effect it will also point out the major problems in teaching of reading in Pakistan. So the question addressed here is, what the problematic areas in the field are.

Apart from the lucky few who have had their early training in western-type schools, most students, even those in relatively advanced classes, experience difficulties in one, some or all of the problem areas described later in this chapter, when they read texts in English. Teachers themselves are often helplessly caught in the baleful network of negative factors that define the public education system, especially at the school level - even if they know what to do they are rarely able to apply their
knowledge. But it is a fact that most teachers have no idea of the elements, factors and processes that go into effective reading, and use no viable strategy for fostering the growth of this primary skill (see chapter 5).

That students should be found to be marginally functional in this skill, even at graduate levels, is not surprising, sad as the fact might be. The blame must go to the generally bad teaching found in the public school system. The researcher has confirmed this through an analysis of answers received to a questionnaire (given as an appendix to this thesis) and through personal observation spread over a teaching career of fifteen years.

6.1 **TEACHING THROUGH TRANSLATION**

The teaching of reading comprehension from the sixth class at school right to graduate levels at college often means no more than supplying Urdu equivalents for English words, so that the average student’s text-book will be found to be littered with marginal noting in Urdu. A quick perusal of some of this activity, reveals that the translation employed by students, presumably derived from what is taught to them by their teachers, or from small ‘pocket’ type bilingual dictionaries, is quite inappropriate, consisting of primary denotations with no regard to connotative shades of meaning in the original text.
The dangers of translation and bilingual dictionaries are well known, but it would not be amiss to consider them once more.

*First*, unless the dictionary in question displays parallel connotations for all meanings of a word (the researcher has come across no such dictionary in Pakistan), it is likely to misrepresent rather than represent meaning. Idiomatic usage, which is extensive in Standard English, gives a sense of rightness to the language in a contemporary, pragmatic sense. However, it falls by the wayside in Pakistan; a miniscule percentage of students will be found who respond appropriately to idiomatic usage, even among candidates for admission to the MA English program. The historical/cultural underpinnings of Urdu and English are different, which means that, even if the dictionary makes an attempt to find parallels in both languages, absolute precision is unlikely because of socio-cultural accretions. Approximations, even good approximations, can be made, but it is probable that something is lost, distorted or changed in translation when it is attempted at advanced levels of learning. In Pakistan, the translation of advanced or technical texts from English to Urdu follows two general patterns. One maintains the syntagmatic features of Urdu and uses a mixture of Urdu and English paradigmatic features, the other insists on Urdu without English in the main text, but with a liberal sprinkling of English terms in margins or brackets, because no *true* parallels exist in everyday Urdu. By ‘true’, the researcher means ‘in common circulation’. Of course, it is possible to find words that carry somewhat the same meaning as the English terms, if not from Urdu’s present lexical stock, then from the source languages of its basic vocabulary, namely Hindi/Sanskrit,
Persian and Arabic. However, even if such terms are introduced they usually fail to be absorbed into the language, or accepted widely, or used naturally.

Second, the habit of using large injections of Urdu as a prop for English is established, so that very little direct mental/cognitive processing takes place in the second language. Its development as a vehicle of thought remains deficient at higher levels, at which this kind of processing is a condition not only of successful reading in the second language, but of writing with some facility in it as well. Both aspects of literacy in English remain underdeveloped and faulty. The answer is, clearly, that as soon as possible after the activation stage has been reached in second language learning, and English should be presented to Pakistani students through English in a process that runs somewhat parallel, if not exactly so, with that encountered by a first-language learner, and not through Urdu as it is done in Pakistan. Cultural elements will certainly be different and the demands on both student and teacher will be higher, but the results will be better.

Third, a process of double translation is introduced (from English to Urdu and then back from Urdu to English), leading to delay, distortion and unnecessary circumlocution. Very little thinking is done in the second language. In fact, students complain that they get very few thoughts in English when they are asked to write something in that language. This more than anything indicates that English is not a flexible vehicle of expression and communication for them and that they think in Urdu first and then try to translate their ideas into English, often imposing the
structures, attitudes and approaches of Urdu on English. Despite these dangers, students and teachers rely heavily on a sustained application of Urdu and on sub-standard bilingual dictionaries throughout their educational lives. The justification for this is that it helps students to get through examinations. Here it must be reiterated that passing examinations is no guarantee that students have acquired primary language skills. In fact, it can be stated that it is possible to ignore those skills and still score high marks in examinations, and that this is a matter of daily observation in educational institutions all over the country.

6.2 READING SYLLABUS IN PAKISTAN

Two intrusive factors lie at the back of this approach to the teaching of reading--massed syllabi, often consisting of random selections of poetry, short stories, essays and novels, on one side, and a national ‘examination and marks’ neurosis that infects parents, guardians, administrators, teachers, job-givers and students alike, on the other. Language competence is considered unimportant provided good marks and impressive institutional results are achieved. Yet the objective of developing the all-important language skill of reading should be primary in all these considerations. Simply trying to understand the messages of a few selected texts in English cannot possibly be advocated by anyone as a desirable end of instruction in English. The only defensible end of such instruction is a working competence in the English language; otherwise it is a waste of time. Once a student has acquired the skills, he can function autonomously in the language. There is no doubt that reading is one of
life's pleasures, and that if an individual can be helped to become a good reader in English, he has at hand a huge treasure-house of knowledge and entertainment to last him all his life, and to take him to greater rewards in his profession whatever it might be. There is still a large component of literature to be found in most syllabi round the country. The old idea that exposure to a lot of good writing in the language improves reading, or other language skills, requires no refutation because it is manifestly wrong. The formula sometimes quoted in the movement from the first to the second language is:

\[ L_2 = L_1 + \text{threshold level } L_2 \]

### 6.2.1 Universal Grammar Hypothesis

This assumes that a fairly painless transfer could take place from the underlying reflection of an assumed 'universal grammar' as manifested in the first language, to a parallel if somewhat different manifestation of the same universal grammar in the second language, provided the essentials in lexis and grammar of the second language were already in place. In practice this is seldom achieved. If this were true, most students taught through the grammar-translation method would be proficient in the second language. No national survey is required to disprove this proposition. Also, whatever be the truth of the 'universal grammar' hypothesis, there are sufficient differences of linguistic features in English and Urdu to cause trouble in transference. Urdu is highly inflected whereas English has only eight inflections, and there are many differences of approach in prepositions, tenses, aspects, articles, number,
gender, conditionals, hypothesizing and word order, among others, which need to be addressed and surmounted before a Pakistani learner can function with any degree of comfort in the second language. It is not primarily a case of transferring the insights of Urdu to the learning of English; it is more a case of bye-passing or unlearning some of those insights so that new linguistic data can be accommodated in the learner's mental schemata. Perhaps even better might be an approach that circumvents those insights and goes straight to the underlying language learning mechanisms of the brain. This would be something like the old direct method of teaching.

There is a strong case for eliminating translation as soon as possible in trying to take the learning step from the first language to the second. Using the first language consciously as the vehicle for the second language will impose an alien structure on it, and this might further be reinforced by the authority of the teacher. The researcher has already spoken about the application of insights derived from the first language system (fully formed in the brain) to the second one (unformed or only partially formed), but this should be allowed only in the first stages. The application should not be a conscious one—it might be better to let the student form his own insights unconsciously, deriving them from the so-called Language Acquisition Device that nativists assume exist in all people. This is envisaged as a basic blueprint for language, and it is asserted that it works best between the ages of two and seven, becoming weaker as time passes. However, if it does exist, it probably continues to provide a mapping formation in the brain for new language data, in which case it might be best to leave the brain to its own devices. The researcher finds it difficult to
lend credence to assertions that language patterns already built into the brain, and further etched into it through the effort of learning the first language, should gradually be erased in the process of growing up.

Detailed research is required as to how many months or years would be optimal in the process of transference from the first language to the second. Most probably no absolute prescriptions would emerge from such a study, because each class, in fact each student, would present different sets of parameters. Much would have to be left to the on-the-spot judgment of teachers, which takes the whole thing back to the first point. In any case, this does not fall within the scope of this thesis. However, it is clear that Urdu should be progressively, and fairly rapidly, eliminated from the process as the student moves forward. The ideal is for total immersion in the second language as quickly as possible, even if the student is not quite ready for it. This researcher hazards a belief, admittedly subjective, that Urdu should be phased out within the first year, or at the most the first two years, of second language teaching. No other way seems feasible. Yet she finds that it is still used heavily for explaining texts in English even at the B.A. level (see chapter 5).

It is common to decry the grammar-translation method as inefficient and unproductive, yet this is still the most commonly employed approach to language teaching in Pakistan. The national curriculum is partly to blame. There is excessive overloading, probably to impress agencies abroad with the extent and fullness of Pakistani degrees. Teachers and students are in a constant flurry to finish their courses
in time for the examinations. Knowing that it is all done superficially, without developing real skills, the most widespread compromise is to resort to ‘help’ books that encapsulate the requirements of the course in note form, and to (sometimes surprisingly accurate) ‘guess papers’ based on analyses of previous examinations. The accuracy of some of these papers can, perhaps, be attributed to inspired guessing, or possibly to an understanding that certain questions and areas of interest are likely to be repeated, or, as commonly rumored, to some kind of ‘insider’ information derived through private arrangements between paper-setters and publishers.

The whole thrust of such material is to get the student through the examination with as little work as possible, with no reference at all to the inculcation of reading (or other language) skills. And there is no need to state that some of these guide books and guess papers are written in very poor English.

This is done against a backdrop of examination anxiety. The marks obtained in examinations often reflect a student’s ability to tackle the format of the examination, or worse still to exploit its loopholes, and not his real language gains. It might be supposed, in fact, that examinations as they are administered in Pakistan are real impediments to learning, especially to language learning, and should therefore be eliminated.

It is a tempting corollary. However, there is no escape from testing and evaluating students at least on their performance proficiency, or overt language behavior, if it is
not possible to evaluate their covert, internal competence. The testing of language skills has already reached an advanced stage of development in some countries abroad, so there is little justification for continuing with a system that, whatever its merits or demerits with regard to other subjects, does very little for the actual skills of language. It must be iterated that the testing of language skills constitutes a field by itself, and that this is a far cry from public examinations as understood in this country.

6.3 PSYCHOLINGUISTIC ELEMENTS

Psycholinguistics informs us that language is, or should be, a kind of transparent screen through which knowledge in the form of meaning or message flows from one side to the other with as little awareness of the language itself as possible. Focusing on the language means focusing away from the message, to the detriment of the latter. Yet a lot of people think that the language is itself the message, so that a great deal of time is spent on forcing exact words into the memory through frequent repetition. This is commonly known as 'cramming', 'parroting', 'learning by heart' or 'rote learning'.

Implicit in this method is a belief that learning is synonymous with memorizing words, but this confuses the medium with the message. There are many common misconceptions with regard to words, but it should be remembered that words do not have any objective existence in the real world, nor do the meanings they carry exist
anywhere except than in the brains of human beings. There is nothing mystical or magical about them. Words by themselves are not ideas; they are only the symbols and carriers of ideas.

The brain usually extracts and stores concepts from language; it does not store the language itself. Forcing a mass of words into the memory is akin to trying to remember every chair one might have seen in one’s life. It is an unfair burden on the memory. It is also unnecessary; the brain stores a generalized idea of ‘chairness’, a quality, or a conceptual distillate, derived from observing several chairs during one’s formative years. In listening one notices a process of reduction and a paring away of non-essentials, and it is probable that a similar process takes place in reading. The brain sifts the useful from the useful and stores the idea, not the whole baggage of language. When the individual needs to talk about a chair, his brain merely re-clothes the concept he already has in his mind in a fresh selection of language, made in accordance with the requirements of the moment, and taken from the linguistic tools that he has at his disposal. The new expression of the concept might be quite different from the first one for a number of reasons, primarily because the whole thing is filtered through the experience, mental field and schematic make-up of the individual, and also because of pragmatic elements influenced by interpersonal, socio-cultural and situational factors.

Cramming requires that both concepts, and all the language initially associated with those concepts, be stored in the memory usually for a few days, until the examination
is completed. In many cases it involves the memorization of language with very little understanding or appreciation of the concepts contained in that language. There are some people who are able to recite whole passages from texts in a foreign language without understanding those passages themselves. In some extreme cases it might involve the memorization of words with no reference at all to the concepts carried by those words.

6.3.1 CRAMMING AND LANGUAGE LEARNING

The peculiar thing about this approach is that it does not seem to improve the learner's language competence. At the end of all this massive cramming, most students are found to be as shaky with the language as they were in the beginning. The twin impediments to language learning in Pakistan, namely, grammar teaching with large inputs of the first language, and wholesale cramming in order to pass examinations, ensure that the end performance of students is inefficient and faulty. Learning can take place at several levels. In general, the more the matter is processed by the brain at a conceptual, cognitive level, the more likely it is to be retained as a deep, non-or-semi-verbal concept or set of related concepts, and the more flexible is it likely to be.

Although cramming is superficial and brittle, there is no doubt that it can be done, and that it is popular in Pakistan because it helps students to get through examinations, especially in papers related to the second language. One finds teachers actually
encouraging their students to cram, and students dutifully doing so, thinking that this is the only way to get through those dreaded examinations. However, the process is unnatural. It is likely to break down if some trivial link in the fragile linguistic sequence is disturbed or forgotten, and the acquisitions are short-lived. The average student remembers very little of what he has learnt within a few days of sitting the examination. There have been many calls for discouraging rote-learning since the beginning of Pakistan, but among students it is still the most common method of getting through examinations, and there is a lot of tacit encouragement for it from teachers:

Language is like the air we breathe. We cannot do without it, but we do not often consciously pay attention to it. It is as though we look through language directly to the meanings it conveys, and the thoughts that it expresses. This quality is often called the transparency of language.\textsuperscript{74}

However, we find a double meaning in the title of another book\textsuperscript{75}, which suggests that some part of the reading function takes note of formal aspects of on the language itself and that this is both natural and desirable. Certainly in critical reading one would expect to look at both the message and language. Both content and formal schemata are activated in the reading process.

6.4 **DIFFERENCE IN ENGLISH AND URDU DISCOURSE**

Pakistani students also contend with a different sensibility in language. Urdu functions on premises different from those of English. It is more ornamental and
circumlocutory; it is given to greater expansion and digression. In writing it has hardly any punctuation marks, no capitalization and no clear boundaries between utterances. Often there is little visible reasoning behind the construction of paragraphs in Urdu, connections between beginnings and endings are tenuous, and the overall planning of discourse sometimes lacks clear evidence of what is known as ‘integrity’, or cohesion and coherence in writing. These are general observations and are not intended as criticisms. However, English has become more and more utilitarian since the eighteenth century, mainly because of the great flowering in science and technology that has taken place since then and also because this language has gradually assumed the position of the world carrier of knowledge. About seventy-five per cent of the world’s knowledge in science, medicine, technology and human development is encoded in English, and new publications continue to pour forth in a copious stream. Pakistani students have to learn how to read efficiently in this language just to keep abreast of events. For this they need to understand that modern English organizes itself round certain precepts, and that these precepts are different from those of Urdu.

6.5 **IMPORTANCE OF ENGLISH AS A MEANS OF IMPARTING KNOWLEDGE**

No parallel body of established knowledge, and of continuing knowledge, exists in any other major language. Urdu is quite low on the scale, since very little advanced
research takes place in any area of knowledge in the country. Some educationists feel that translation could solve the problem. Such people say if there is new finding anywhere in the world (it need not be in the English-speaking world), let it be transposed quickly into Urdu and the problem will vanish by itself. In fact translation would introduce many new problems. First, whatever the national level in English might be, and it is not a high one, Pakistan still has some residual ability in this language, but it has hardly any ability at all in other major languages. For practical reasons our translators would have to restrict themselves to English for most of their efforts. Second, knowing English and Urdu equally well would not qualify a person to be a translator, because he would also need to be a subject specialist with a fair level of comprehension of the discipline he is trying to translate. Third, time is important because there is a constant flow of material emanating from the developed world. Something translated today might become obsolete tomorrow; such is the pace of discovery in some areas of study. Finally, translation on a national scale would require several acknowledged subject experts who are equally fluent at English and Urdu, and the dissemination of their translations would require a large publishing, printing and distribution network to make it accessible to the common man. Translation is slow, expensive, unreliable and cumbersome. There seems to be no alternative to learning a major language, and English is the world’s dominant one at this point in time, for people living in a third-world environment who want to keep up with the knowledge explosion.
The researcher has assumed that there is some truth in the universal grammar hypothesis and that it should be possible to transfer some of the internalized knowledge of the fully developed first language to a poorly developed second language, provided a suitable framework of transference is maintained. By this she means that the process should be guided through a comparative point-by-point analysis for both languages. Those areas that overlap would not need to be taught excessively, while those areas that differ considerably would need to be highlighted as conscious teaching points. Urdu can act as a useful stimulus at the activation stage of second language learning. Translation sometimes addresses real needs, and can make second language learners more explicitly aware of their own communicative strategies, but there is always the proviso that it be used sparingly and with the utmost caution, and perhaps not at all once the activation stage has been passed. The goal is a genuine bi-lingual ability, and not a second-language ability that remains passively dependent on the first language throughout the individual's life. This is true of all the skills of language, but especially so of the skills of reading.

In fairness it must be mentioned that some people\textsuperscript{76} doubt the validity of the universal grammar hypothesis and question whether much worthwhile transference takes place. Others point out the ever present dangers of interference\textsuperscript{77}, an overriding phenomenon that mars so much second language teaching that it might be better to avoid using the first language altogether, except for minimal explanation and that, too, only in the beginning of the learning effort. However, there is so much opacity in the opening stages of second language learning that, rather than witness their students struggling
with things they do not understand, conscious that they have a heavy syllabus to cover in an unrealistically short period, many teachers resort to frequent and copious explanations in the first language. Yet, in making things easy for the students and themselves, such teachers actually sabotage the whole process. Second language learning, perhaps more than other kinds of learning, needs some degree of struggle and gradual approximation as the student moves forward, if at some stage it is to be used as a cognitive tool. Pakistanis certainly need it more and more as such a tool as they progress to higher levels of education.

The question of how much and what kind of grammar should be taught remain unresolved. In the absence of firm recommendations to the contrary, most language teachers simply resort to the old ways. This is in line with national perceptions. People who design syllabi are themselves grounded in those ways. The choice in applied linguistics at the moment is between the ‘right–wrong’ rule-based grammar of the kind most people struggle through with varying degrees of success at school, the ‘linguistic’ or descriptive kind of grammar which presents the target language without the tyranny of the ‘right-wrong’ approach, ‘pedagogical’ teaching/learning grammar with a lot of pattern-drilling and habit formation, and ‘generative grammar’ which attempts to establish, not the utterances of the second language, but the mechanisms whereby that language can be generated. There are some schools of thought that recommend the circumvention of grammar altogether, claiming that second-language learning should be as close as possible to the so-called ‘natural’ processes that take place in first language acquisition and ‘communicative
competence’, an approach which brings performance factors to the front in preference to grammatical precision. However, the average schoolteacher in Pakistan has no choice in the matter. The syllabus usually presents her with graded study increments in the first kind of grammar, the simple present and the present continuous for the first six months, for example, then the past tense in its various manifestations for the next six months, and so on. That is what she has to teach, masses of it, without regard to real skill-acquisition, within a certain time frame, or be thrown out of her job.

6.6 **INTEGRATION OF LANGUAGE SKILLS**

So far, the researcher has spoken of reading in isolation, but it is partly dependent on other language skills. The aural/oral skills are important for reading literature, especially poetry. This is true even for silent reading. Unless the stress, accent and intonation patterns are internalized, there will be very little appreciation of the paralinguistic characteristics of literature. Without these skills the whole exercise of studying literature is reduced to message extraction with the help of large infusions of Urdu, paraphrasing and note-giving. This is, in fact, what happens, even at advanced levels of study.

The skills of writing also have a bearing on reading. This skill remains undeveloped because it is not taught or practiced consciously. A lot of people think that writing is a mere reflex of reading. Most of what is called ‘study’ means reading, with very little writing. Greater precision in writing English than is common in Pakistan today is
required for better insights into reading. Writing helps students to form internal pictures of words, phrases, even whole utterances, so that less strain is felt when the same or similar expressions are encountered in a reading text. A lot of reading is of this anticipatory kind. The brain passes quickly over known quantities and gives itself more time for essential aspects of reading. Doing helps learning, and there is a strong link between the hand and brain. Seeing words, as in reading, is certainly useful, but writing them can etch them into the brain’s schematic patterns. There is an obvious and mutually active relationship between reading and writing, and both need to be developed, separately and together. It should be remembered that reading is not the mere absorption of writing. It is more like a parallel creation of writing, a reprocessing through many ancillary factors in the mind, the existence of some of which might reasonably be assumed, while others probably exist but are beyond observation simply because the brain lies under a closed, opaque shell which defies attempts to watch it at work.

The skill of listening might have little obvious bearing on reading, but in processing some kinds of text, especially literary ones, there is a kind of ‘silent listening’ that takes place in the brain of the reader. Certainly, for the appreciation of poetry, for example, the phonic aspects of language assume great importance, even if the reading is done silently. However, at advanced stages of reading it is recommended that the sound element of language be given minimal importance, because trying to ‘hear’ the written word, or allowing throat muscles to act in the ‘sub-vocalization’ of sounds, or moving the lips in a kind of parody of reading aloud, can act as impediments to rapid
reading. Generally it may be said that the integration of skills is useful in the language learning process in that one skill may enrich or validate another. However, it should be remembered that while each skill is partially dependent on other skills, it also operates in a partially independent environment, has its own tempo, manages words in its own way and creates its own frame of reference. For example, there is little point in reducing the potential speed of reading to that of writing simply in order to integrate the two skills. Writing proceeds slowly because it is a process of putting small bits and pieces together to form first words, then sentences and then discourse; whereas reading can synthesize large units of language in one large sweep of the eyes over a page of writing. Something that takes half an hour to write might be satisfactorily scanned and absorbed in two or three minutes of reading. Probably the most productive approach to teaching a second language is to integrate the skills up to a point, but to teach them separately as well.

From what has transpired so far in this thesis with regard to the recognition of certain basic processes found in efficient reading, the following summary may be established:

There are physical aspects which include eye movements down the middle of the page rather than from side to side, and attempts to see words, phrases and sentences as wholes, so that time is not wasted on nonessentials. Speed-reading was advocated some years ago as a remedy for inefficient reading, the idea being that the brain could be trained to decode incoming visual data at a progressively more and more rapid pace. At one time speed-reading machines,
computer programs and training techniques were developed for this purpose. The principle behind them was a takeoff from the James-Lange theory in psychology, namely, that the training of muscles, in these case eye-muscles, could help in the development of mental responses. Though some institutions might still employ them, these methods and approaches are no longer in general use, probably because of a growing realization that (a) people read with their brains, not their eyes, that (b) the speed of reading is variable, depending on the type of data given to the brain, and that (c) it is determined more by the rate at which the brain can comfortably process information than by the rapid presentation of reading data. There is little point in presenting graphemes to the brain at blinding speed if the brain is unable to decode them. The brain decides these things for itself, decoding some kinds of data very rapidly and other kinds quite slowly. Whatever the truth of the matter, little cognizance is taken of these researches or methods at any level in Pakistan.

Two objections come to mind immediately with regard to this exercise, which is not uncommon in Pakistani institutions. The first objection is that reading is slowed down to the speed of speech, and that this is an unnecessary restriction on the skill of reading--good speakers might be able to say 150 words a minute, but this is nowhere near the speed of efficient reading, which might be four or more times greater. The second objection is that speaking gets habituated to the prop of reading. It is not uncommon to find L2 learners who get no ideas, and are unable to speak, unless they have a written text in front of them. Associational conditioning can be
quite strong, especially if it is reinforced year after year at school and college, and it might develop into a restrictive habit. This kind of conditioning does not apply only to the second language. It is observed that some people cannot speak with confidence in public even in the first language without the reading prop, indicating a strong possibility that reading is done in this way for both the first and second languages. Despite these objections, and they are valid ones, there is probably some merit in reading aloud so that the written word is associated with the spoken one. However, most learners learn their second language through the written word rather than the spoken one, so that writing tends to dominate speaking. This would not matter much if English were a phonetic language, but the disparity between speech and writing is considerable in this language. Reading aloud is useful in the early stages of learning, but it should be done sparingly with a dominant oral element (rather than a subordinate one), and should be discouraged quite quickly as the student progresses. In Pakistan the reverse is true in most institutions. In any case, reading aloud should not be practiced much in advanced classes, but it is still in evidence everywhere. Almost universally, teachers indulge in it for teaching texts in the second language. Even if they do not ask students to do it themselves, the whole thing is reduced to a reading/speaking link in the classroom.

In continuation of the previous paragraph, it should be remembered that while one language skill has a bearing on another, each represents its own linguistic frame and can be exploited in different ways as well. There is some overlapping and some separation, and each area needs to be determined and developed consciously. It is
not right that one language skill should become restrictively or parasitically
dependent on another. In general it might be said that the receptive skills of listening
and reading are synthetic and rapid, while the productive skills of speaking and
writing are relatively slow, with writing coming out as the slowest and most
deliberate of all.

Little or no recognition of this is encountered in most institutions round the country.
Even if teachers know about it and recognize its importance, they usually complain
that they do not have enough time to encourage the habit formation of this kind of
reading among their students. Yet there is a strong exponentially to reading—the
more one reads the more one can read. Reading everything helps one to read
anything. Schematic reading fields are strengthened in the brain by wide reading,
and this makes it easier for the learner to process new text when he encounters it.
Extensive reading is so important that it should be encouraged at all levels; yet this
is rarely done in Pakistan.

Related to extensive reading, but more focused in its scope, is supplementary
reading. Students are asked to read material related to the subject in hand but beyond
that prescribed in the syllabus. Difficulties exist with the control and feedback of
reading in categories ‘c’ and ‘d’, especially with large classes. Techniques exist, but
a lot depends on what kinds of objectives are fixed for this exercise. If the objectives
are skill development and the widening of the student’s cognitive field, some
motivation will be found. However, if the student's sole objective is to pass an examination, there will be little motivation for independent reading of any kind.

This is similar in concept to both of the previous categories, but is not supervised or canalized, except in a very loose way. Teachers complain that students tend to do nothing unless they are monitored, and that library periods often degenerate into aimless escapism. Yet some part of learning should be self-motivated. Ideally, all learning should be self-motivated. Internal motivation is considered to be stronger and more effective than external motivation. What the student wants to do tends to remain with him longer, and be valued to a greater degree, than what he has to do. Sometimes students do not really know what to do in libraries, so a little training in finding books, taking notes and using catalogues or looking up lists on computers might be useful.

This concentrates upon the assimilation of language as manifested in words, phrases, sentences, discourse, and structure. It caters to the maximum understanding of a piece of writing with regard to arguments, symbolic, emotional and social overtones, the author's attitudes and purposes and the linguistic and literary devices used by the author in the furtherance or embellishment of his purposes. What the researcher has observed is that in Pakistan, even at higher secondary levels, the approach to intensive reading usually degenerates into the teacher giving lexical meanings and copious explanations in Urdu, writing paraphrases and dictating explanatory notes in English for students to learn by heart for examinations. It is a way of manipulating
the system. It is a tacit concession to the generally low standards found in English among students coming through the public school system which bye-passes the need for language and gives easy solutions for passing examinations. Not much is done by way of extracting teaching points, and hardly anything is done to highlight language features or develop linguistic insights. At the end of it, students might have degrees, but they remain very shaky with regard to language skills. The system bends to the low standards of its own product in a self-destructive cycle, which is norm rather than criteria based. Educational standards are inexorably dragged down to the real levels of students: students are not pulled up to the stated standards of the syllabus.

One of the main reasons of poor reading habits is lack of motivation. Adult learners in Pakistan lack motivational force for the development of reading skills. It has been noted that interests are influenced by (a) the nature and (b) the motive of the reader. Usually the more closely the topic and the reader’s motives are interrelated; the more intensive will be the interest of the reader. Various motives for reading could be informative, aesthetic, and recreational.

The adult occupies a motivational middle ground where reading is concerned. He must cope with extrinsic reading pressures such as reading tests, literature course grades, reading assignments for content courses and such devices as teachers use for reading instruction. At the same time, he may draw upon most of the intrinsic
motivations of adulthood. Average Pakistani student does not have the urge to read because of the above mentioned reasons.

These classifications suggest a broad range of possible reasons for which mature readers might read. It is not at all certain that typical pupils and adults do read for all these reasons. These possible effects do reflect a transformation of primary and secondary needs into reading circumstances. For a more pragmatic view of the motivating factors in reading, we need to consider representative findings of studies of reading habits and interests of our students and adults. Although considerable differences are reflected in frequency and type of personal reading among pupils and adults, the typical reading patterns in Pakistan fall short of that representative of mature reading and the objectives of educational system are not clearly defined. In effect, the majority of our secondary graduates reflect reading habits and motivations, which range from non-reading to recreational reading practices representative of minimal literacy and they do not read for determined purposes. There are certain reasons for it as mentioned before. It is researcher's observation that due to all above-mentioned factors, Pakistani learners are developmentally immature readers.

The general nature of reading, the broad possible effects of reading, and the reported habits and interests in reading have notable implications for the secondary and higher secondary school reading effort. The broadening and upgrading of student reading habits in our situation deserve more emphasis then they receive at the moment. Pupil classroom reading patterns and adult reluctance to read quality nonfiction or fiction
suggest that something is wrong with the educational goals, and/or with the choice of
reading matter for Pakistani schools and colleges. Syllabus planners should be aware
that reading in the second language is not quite the same as that of the first language.

6.7 **COGNITIVE RESOURCES OF READER**

Learning to read is highly dependent upon the ability to make and retain associations
between verbal symbols to form linguistic statements and ideational arrangements.
Moreover, reading is a kind of thoughtful verbal behavior. The writing of mature
writers for mature audiences represents varying degrees of imagery, reasoned
processes of ideas and other abstract operations. The capable reader must be able to
transfer and transform meanings gained in one language setting to other language
settings. He will need to educe i.e to perceive contrasts and thought patterns not
previously learned...the relationships of items presented by the writer's thinking and
expression, the reader must deal successfully with connotations, influences of
unstated concepts and the organization of ideas as represented in creative and
expository writing. The skills mentioned above lack in most of the Pakistani readers.

Generally, it may be said that the average adequate secondary reader benefits from
both types of motivation. On the other hand, the inadequate secondary reader may
find little basis for responding to either type of motivation. Ideally, the extrinsic
motivation of school assignments would draw as directly as possible upon pupil needs
and interests. And the pupil, in turn, would develop the facility for finding intrinsic reward in school reading situations. The school reading program, of course, should be concerned with increasing the range of reading experiences with which the pupil finds satisfaction. Some consideration of the effects, habits and interests of adult and secondary pupil reading should add to our understanding of reading motivation.

Successful interaction with written language can affect the emotional and intellectual make up of the individual reader, or even of a whole community of readers. Motivation and its related effects begin with the primary physiological needs of the individual such as hunger or opportunities for rest and renewal and might manifest itself in activity for the avoidance of pain and discomfort through learning. These are generalized into secondary needs of a psychogenic or socialized nature: security, adequacy, acceptance, recognition, achievement, order, companionship, new experience, activity freedom and independence, and so on. Each of these may become operational in a particular situation through various incentives. But to satisfy these needs is basically why we read. Moreover, these conditions exert some influence on how we interpret the meaning of written material. Hill and Ellen have recommended that upper-grade pupils be guided in recognizing the needs and motives by which material appeals to them, and which influence their reading responses.
6.8  STUDY SKILLS

Pakistani learners, at the advance stage of their learning, lack study skills. They are very poor at some of the skills mentioned in the earlier chapters. It has already been mentioned that study reading needs training. Since most of them fall short of the competence in that area, they fail in accumulating knowledge in specified time. As a result, they do not do well in the content areas as well. It is safe to say that very few primary institutions in the country are either aware of, or follow, any of the principles enumerated here. Between the twin evils of apathy and ignorance on one side and manipulation of the examination system on the other, not much is achieved in terms of real reading ability by the average student by the time he reaches graduate levels. The whole complex is exacerbated by a deep resentment, especially among students who come through the local-medium schools, towards English as an alien language, an unwarranted residue of foreign rule, an unnecessary imposition on the academic system and a symbol of class consciousness. Attention is drawn to answers to a questionnaire received from teachers of English in institutions in and around Islamabad and Rawalpindi (see chapter 5).

To counter this debilitating, almost fatal trend in teaching reading in Pakistan, some kind of ‘free’ reading sessions should be built into the teaching cycle. Reading material should be developed so that students can read and pace themselves with minimum interference from teachers. Reading kits on the lines of the American SRA
reading cards can be developed fairly easily, based on ‘readability’ analyses so that students can proceed from easier texts to more difficult ones. This comes into the vitally important area of extensive reading. Among other factors, readability analyses are based on kinds of sentences, simple, compound, complex, short or long; kinds of words, common or uncommon; density of thought; level of thought; subject matter; maturity and presentation. Questions range from simple information extraction type questions for beginners, to advanced inference type questions for more mature and competent students. Such cards would be available for students to complete at their own pace in the classroom or the library. Weak students might be able to complete one, two or three cards in one forty-minute session, while good readers might run through five, six or more. The teacher would be a moderating influence to facilitate and regulate the session, not to dictate its directions or to establish common a tempo for all the students. His or her direct help would be at a minimum, occupying perhaps not more than five per cent of the learning time. Such reading sessions are of inestimable value and should be included in reading syllabi at all levels. That the reading teacher should do almost nothing is a strange concept for most Pakistani teachers, but they have to learn that their interference, well meaning though it might be, can disturb the learning effort of their students. The researcher assumes that in cognitive learning a student will sometimes wander around helplessly not knowing what to do, but that this is a part of a process of struggle, and is actually good for him.
In sum, it may be stated that large scale revisions are required at all levels with regard to objectives, syllabi, teaching materials, testing and evaluation and teacher training and attitudes. Testing procedures designed to stimulate learning and to pinpoint areas of student weakness are certainly desirable. Other procedures designed to test learning gains and skill acquisition, are also required, but these should never become punitive.

Perhaps it is too much to ask that examinations as they are currently perceived and administered in the country be downgraded or eliminated. At the moment they dominate all aspects of the system. Their main fault is that the focus is on the product, not on the process. If a student can get through examinations without really developing autonomous skills in reading (something that happens in large numbers each time there is an examination), society and the system seem to be satisfied. The system can be, and is, beaten by teachers, guidebook sellers and students all the time. Unfortunately, there is a social-bureaucratic-educational mindset about examinations. A recent experiment in the country to remove examinations for primary school students has resulted in an outcry, and is likely to be rescinded. There is a conservative fear of change and the unknown, and a compensatory desire to perpetuate the familiar, regardless of how badly it is functioning.

So far the researcher has spoken about reading problems in the second language. It is not at all clear that reading skills and habits are adequately developed in the first language (assumed to be Urdu in Pakistan), pointing to a general deficiency of method and approach with regard to this primary skill. It is possible to argue that
learning to read properly in the first language helps the development of reading skills in the second language.

Further to the discussion of this idea, one inference from a statement like this is that reading weaknesses in the second language are attributable to reading weaknesses in the first language, so that improvements in reading skills in English come as a corollary to improvements in reading skills Urdu. In other words, the weakness is not of inadequacy in the second language but of inadequate skill development in the first language.

However, another inference is possible, that there might be a general failure with language learning all round, particularly with English, so that reading weaknesses in English are the result of low level language acquisitions in English rather than of inadequate skill development in Urdu. The transference phenomenon is sometimes overstated. Urdu is different in many ways from English, even if one accepts the 'universal grammar' hypothesis. If the second inference is given greater credence, trying to learn reading in isolation from the other skills might be self-defeating, and one is forced to revert to the fact that the only valid purpose of learning a second language is to learn it properly, meaning all four of its skills, plus its graces, its nuances, its idioms, even its slang and substandard usages.
Reading in the second language cannot be the same as reading in the first language, because interference from the first language is heavy and insistent, and also because the levels of acquisition in the second language are comparatively low. Added to these there are pragmatic factors generated by socio-cultural and situational elements. What seems natural or ordinary in the first language might seem out of place, strange and difficult to comprehend in the second. The mind-scripts of native speakers in the two languages might be different in a significant number of cultural areas. This leads to the conclusion that reading material in the second language should be selected from a culturally neutral standpoint, if such is possible. It can be argued that, now that English is used by so many people round the world, it is no longer the strict preserve of British people, so it should no longer be necessary to learn something about their culture if people want to learn their language. It is not their language any more.

Even so, this skill will generally be found to be better in Urdu, because students are exposed to a great deal more Urdu in this society than English. The researcher has worked on the assumption, that in Pakistan English is used primarily as a source of modern knowledge (through reading), secondarily as a means of communicating in writing for purposes of planning, government and business, but hardly ever as a vehicle of oral communication anywhere in the country. The temptation here is to separate reading from the other skills and exert the main thrust of teaching on this skill to the near exclusion of the other ones. Regardless of the valid arguments given in the previous chapter with regard to the conscious integration, partial integration or
separation of the four skills, there is some sense in doing what is really required by
the country rather than wasting time with skills that might never or hardly ever be
used. Already something like this is visible in many institutions, educational or
otherwise. Yet it is seen that most students who reach higher levels of education are
inadequate readers in English. Except for the small percentage of children who have
their education in genuine English-medium schools (and these students read more
readily in English than in Urdu), most students read English at a slower speed and
with less comprehension than they read Urdu.

The British propagated the English language in this region with a great deal of
aggressive impatience, tending to vilify anything which deviated from their own
world view, or to jeer at an utterance which differed even slightly from their own way
of saying things. In doing so they did irremediable harm to the cause of their own
language in the sub-continent, because local inhabitants associated the effort to learn
it with constant failure and sustained ridicule. There was endless uncertainty and
diffidence about using the language. A lot of psychological pressure was brought to
bear on the whole business, and the colonial policy at the back of it was simple; praise
everything British and downgrade everything local. Considerable psychological
damage resulted from this policy. That many children at that time grew up thinking it
was much more important to learn something about London than about Karachi, or
with a mind-set that assumed, ‘local is inferior, British is superior’, is not surprising.
What is surprising is that some of these attitudes are still in evidence today, especially
among those in a position to take decisions with regard to educational directions and policy. But they are confined mostly to the decision-making class. A surprising degree of resentment can be observed among ordinary citizens and students who come through the public school system. They regard it as an unwarranted imposition, and as an irritatingly durable symbol of upper-class pretensions. The exoticism found in learning, say, French or German, is absent when it comes to English, which suffers from a heavy undertow of political and linguistic resentment. But then, the comparison with other languages is probably false. People who learn these languages do so because they want to, whereas English is compulsory; internal motivation is always superior to external motivation in learning things. The teacher of reading in English has a barrier of resistance to break before she can do anything worthwhile. Mostly, she finds that her students expect her to help them through the examination, and not to actually get down and teach them something useful in English.

With regard to cultural underpinnings, if they have to use English at all, Pakistanis in general feel more comfortable with the indigenized versions of the language that are found in this country, than with foreign versions of it, even if those versions represent native speech more accurately. English is taught as a foreign or second language in Pakistan, but the fact is that there are several localized dialects of the language which have been in continuous use for a variety of purposes since the coming of the British to these parts a hundred and fifty years ago, and since the beginnings of the country more than half a century ago, and that before independence a more self-conscious
Indic/British kind of English had fair currency in this region. Most reading texts for the last fifty-six years have been imported from either Britain or America, more from Britain in the early years and more from America in recent ones. Sometimes Pakistani versions of these texts were introduced as the answer to the problem of culture, but a quick perusal shows that most of them were really the same, except that John became, say, Salim, Mary became Nasreen and London on the River Thames became Lahore on the River Ravi. Changing names of people and places hardly reduces the problem. English as it is presented to students in Pakistan is still remote from their daily lives. It is still the carrier of foreign ideas, living habits and customs, and remains divorced from the real experiences of children or young adults here. The researcher is of the opinion that one way of breaking the barrier noted in the previous paragraph would be to introduce reading material culled more and more from local sources, and that this would prove beneficial to the national effort in learning reading skills. Writers who can use the language gracefully and flexibly do exist in the country, but they are given very little recognition or exposure.

For this at least one centre for the development of study material needs to be established as soon as possible. Reading material can be organized so that the exercise becomes almost completely autonomous, and once a degree of efficiency has been attained in reading, it can be used for the reinforcement of other skills. If speaking is the central skill of first language learning, in many respects reading is the central skill
of second language learning, providing a great deal of matter for the skill of writing, and also providing a framework for listening and speaking exercises.

The researcher concludes that educated Pakistanis suffer from a strange linguistic dichotomy. They use one or two local languages for their oracy requirements, but a great deal of English for reading and writing. There are, in fact, many people in this country who hardly ever speak in English, and, at the same time, hardly ever read or write in Urdu or a regional language. In such a situation, there is not much point in talking about the integration of language skills, and it might make more sense, from the way languages are actually used in Pakistan, and from a pedagogical point of view, to concentrate on teaching the skills of literacy in English, so that students can read the language with ease and comfort, and write reasonably standard English when they need to (quite frequently), and waste less time on teaching the skills of speaking and listening (which are rarely needed). The researcher is aware that such a recommendation might not be popular with fellow teachers or educational planners in the country.

The researcher has already mentioned that the phenomenon of transference from L1 to L2 is inadequately understood, and that too much reliance on this aspect may lead to some of the pedagogical aberrations noted earlier, namely, using Urdu as a crutch for learning English, permitting the destructive intrusion of the Urdu mind-set, and indulging in the various tricks employed by bazaar-book publishers, teachers and
students, to shunt students through examinations without demonstrable acquisitions in the skills of the language. Also, it cannot be asserted that all Pakistanis are good at reading in L1 (assumed to be Urdu), or that they have a highly developed set of literacy skills in the first language that can be transferred with a few changes and amendments to the second one. As already noted in the preceding paragraph, most Pakistanis are chained from quite a young age by circumstances and the exigencies of education, to a linguistic mode wherein the skills of oracy are heavily weighted towards one or two local languages, while those of literacy are heavily weighted towards another one which has its roots abroad. Good reading skills can be transferred to the second language only if they exist in the first place, but in fact the primary learning thrust in reading is given to the poorly learnt second language in preference to the first, in Pakistan. A triple failure is built into the process: (a), inadequate reading skills in the first language (b), inadequate language competence in the second language and (c), poor language planning and teaching in both.

The researcher has also indicated that she lends less credence than some of her fellow teachers to the idea that reading competence is a matter of increasing speed, since a lot of what is required by the brain in trying to decode reading material is done automatically and unconsciously by that organ, and interfering with it in a conscious, artificial manner might actually reduce its performance. However, it cannot be discounted altogether. Reading speed in the first language can be increased from an average of 250 words per minute to about 500 words a minute by paying attention to things like eye-movement (reduction of eye-backtracking, reduction of eye-fixating).
bad habits like sub-vocalizing (mouthing words, moving the tongue or lips) or unnecessary limitations like failing to adjust reading speed to material. In Pakistan students have yet another bad reading habit, that of relying heavily on translation.

What is true of the first language might also be true of the second, especially in view of the observation made earlier, namely, that many Pakistani students are in the anomalous position of being more competent (at least in reading) in the second language than they are in the first. The justifications adduced for the speed reading movement is that the eye can be trained to work across written material at greater and greater speeds, that the brain can be trained to accommodate written data at the speed at which the eye collects it, and that this helps the brain to sift what is important from what is not with maximum efficiency, and with the least waste of time. It is said that the rapidly forward thrust of the eye forces the brain to adopt certain data processing and decoding strategies, like over-viewing, prediction, guesswork, deriving meaning from context, supplying meaning from its own reserves, and so on. It is said that because the brain works harder it is more likely to remember important points in what the eye picks up rapidly than in what the eye sees through a succession of jerks or frequent regressions.

However, the researcher's reservations with regard to speed reading remain. One big advantage of written material is that, unlike the ephemeral spoken word, it remains as a tangible block of language that may be referenced twice, or twenty or more times, as required. It is natural for the eye to roam over written material and regress when
the brain has found something it cannot process readily. The controlling mechanisms lie in the brain, not the eye. The advocates of speed reading insist on an ever forward movement for the eye, which might lead to astonishing feats of velocity (such as reading a whole book in a few minutes) but which might lay the exercise open to the charge of superficiality. Perhaps a better way of attaining reading efficiency is extensive reading.

What is called ‘study’ is often little more than ‘reading’, and it stands to reason that improvements in reading skills should lead to improvements in study skills. In opposition to the ‘full speed ahead’ approach advocated in speed reading, the approach called SQ3R (survey, question, read, recall review) recommends a combination of elements, among which it will be seen that re-reading under recycled conditions remains an important one.

The researcher has indicated her dissatisfaction with the kind of reading material that is included at various levels in syllabi round the country. Mostly it consists of anthologies compiled by senior teachers. Some of these have a few ‘comprehension’ questions at the end of each essay or article, plus (perhaps) a few explanatory notes or a glossary of words and terms. The researcher has attempted to show that the physical and mental processes involved in reading are complex. In fact, they are probably more complex than what she has been able to show here, but certain intangibles have to be subsumed. To limit them to a simple ‘meaning-gathering’ or comprehension exercise is to place unnecessary constraints on them.
Good reading material takes all the elements identified in the SQ3R approach mentioned earlier. In the teaching of reading, the material should be such that a student can handle all or most of it by himself, so that the teacher's role is redefined to that of general monitor and facilitator. It should not be dependent on explanations by the teacher, except in a very small way.

The initial letter S (survey) indicates a holistic introduction of the material, before proceeding to an examination of its parts\(^1\), thereby satisfying the cognitive, and gestalt factors implicit in the process. Gestalt theory states that the brain perceives wholes before it moves to parts. An overview of the material is useful, because it provides a framework and context for the subject in question in its different manifestations. And it is known that language derives a lot of its significance from context.

The Q (question) part of the process is of great importance. Through questioning, the brain sift knowledge for itself in advance what it knows about the subject in hand, and fits the new knowledge into categories and frames it already possesses. This is not an easy element to include in the development of good reading material, but it can be done. Many students find it difficult to raise relevant questions, and need to be guided. However, some students will be assertive in their reactions to what they read, and this is all to the good. In the study of meaning, it is generally recognized that a significant component of meaning is supplied by the recipient (in this case the reader),
and that it is dependent to a large, sometimes crucial, extent on the interpretive powers of the recipient.

The first R (read) indicates a full and honest reading of the text, but again done as a whole if possible, and not in discrete parts. With some advance idea about the whole thing, and with a few questions for which the reader will want answers, the reading becomes focused and canalized rather than diffuse and disoriented. Some answers might confirm what the student already knows, some might surprise him. In any case, he is now looking for things, and it is known that, confronted by a mass of material, the eye tends to pick out what the brain tells it to look for. Put simply, if the purpose is to look for a needle in a haystack, the eye might actually find it, but if the brain does not know what it is looking for, the eye will probably flounder around aimlessly.

The second R (recall) asks for an active effort by the brain to go over the material without the prop of the text. The more the brain works on what is to be learnt, the better it is learnt. In the ninth chapter the researcher stated that memorizing large chunks of language tends to be superficial, short-lived and rigid. Recall enables the brain to think in concepts, and to relate the new to the old, making it more meaningfully a part of the reader's life experience.

The third R (review) can be seen as a cementing, consolidating exercise, which gives the reader confidence that he has understood what he has read and that he will probably find it in his memory when he needs to retrieve or use it at a later stage.
Reading is rather pointless if nothing is derived from it, or if the knowledge gleaned from it is not available for use in a flexible, ready manner when required.

The human brain probably has other strategies at its disposal about which little can be said, because it is not possible to look inside the brain to observe its workings. However, the conscious use of approaches such as those suggested here can improve its efficiency both with regard to the way reading should be tackled, and what can be done with it afterwards. The study material used for reading in our educational institutions should be designed specifically for reading, keeping all these elements in mind.

In summary, the researcher feels that (a), while the ideal of integrated language skills should not be lost sight of, reading is the most important skill in second language learning in Pakistan, and should receive greater focus than it has now (b), it should be taught consciously, which means that educational planners, administrators, syllabus designers and teachers should be trained in its implications and requirements, and (c), properly graded reading material suitable for Pakistani students, based on some of the observations and insights suggested in this thesis, should be developed with due regard for cultural sensitivities and local requirements within the country, preferably through some kind of national consensus.

The last recommendation (c) is as important as the inculcation of positive attitudes, teacher training, syllabus design, evaluation and the recognition that reading is more
important than other skills in the second language context. From what the researcher has seen, there is a paucity of material designed specially for reading, and what little exists is not at all based on current reading theory and practice in the world. The student suffers all the way through the system. Unless he or she is an exceptionally brilliant student, who is able to move beyond the limitations imposed by poor approaches and materials, or has a certain background, or has come through comparatively enlightened institutions, his or her reading skills in both the first and second language will tend to remain underdeveloped. This is, in fact, what a lot of teachers observe at advanced levels of education in colleges and schools.

**CONCLUDING REMARKS**

After having gone through extensive exercise of research, the researcher has come across some eye opening realities affecting the teachers in general and teachers of reading skills in particular (if at all available). The research revealed that it is not only a problem of lack of professionalism, commitment and motivation on the part of Pakistani teachers rather there are a number of problems that exist within the whole system of Pakistan's or for that matter all alike countries governance, economic system and lack of political will in general and education in particular that nourishes a very negative environment for overall state business. Consequently, among others, the education system of the country also has to face the consequences and suffer. Although it is projected that the government is investing great financial resources on
education, yet it has always been allocating a meager percentage of GDP for education sector. Since independence the English Language teaching has never been a priority area or a business case for the government of Pakistan and the researcher does not foresee any better in the near future in this direction. In support of her arguments she presents the following facts and figures (updated by her) as a table that shows a resources allocation comparison of Pakistan with other countries in the region:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>%age of GDP</th>
<th>Financial Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2005-06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2005-06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2005-06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2005-06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Due to minimum budgetary allocation of financial resources and lack of vision on the part of Government, there are inadequate training facilities available for teachers in general and no special training programmes being offered with special focus on teaching reading skills in Pakistan in particular. The researcher feels that we have to cultivate an environment of "action research". Action research will definitely help in getting right answer to the problems of teaching and learning reading skills in our
educational institutions. The researcher also strongly believes that there is a considerable gap between attention being given to reading skills and other subjects in our educational institutions and also there is no basic infrastructure available (other than National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad - NUML) that works specifically on the framework of language teaching. Moreover, the researcher has never heard of any donor funded project on English Language Teaching apart from one or two recent interventions by USAID. In Pakistani institutions teaching of English language skills is not being given due attention. Even the same applies on national language “Urdu” (teaching language skills in not the focus).

One other de-motivating factor is teachers’ considerably low pay-scales, they have to take up additional jobs to make their both ends meet. It is obvious that in such cases it becomes very difficult for anybody to be committed to the profession. These facts have given birth to socio-cultural and psychological factors which have greatly affected the standard of English Language Teaching in general and reading skills in particular as discussed in this dissertation earlier. Since the teaching profession is looked down upon by the teachers (especially male) by themselves and by society as revealed by the findings of interviews discussed in chapter 5, therefore the teaching profession is taken as a last resort for the unemployed masses of the country and they who take up this occupation accept it as their fate and keep looking for other better jobs. Apart from their own implications the socio-cultural factors have caused number of psychological problems for every kind of teachers in Pakistan such as low motivation, lower morale level, indifference and negativism towards their
professional skills improvement and progress in their respective field. Owing to these factors the teachers of Pakistan take teaching as their occupation rather than profession and they do not seem to be willing to improve professionally. Thus, poor performance is seen.

It is apt to remark here that the efforts of researcher commenced with the problem of reading skills at advance level, therefore, it started with the theoretical understanding of reading process and then related factors. One of them was the teachers themselves, with the help of the research findings the researcher had to shift her focus and/or angle of her research from the technical skills of teachers to the root causes of their poor performance. The researcher offers no formulaic recipes instead she has identified the problematic areas to be undertaken for further research, exploration and analysis.
73 Maria Montessori, *The Discovery of the Child*, (Clio Oxford, 1988), 247 and passim. This is a persistent belief. One finds echoes of it in *Itard* at the beginning of the nineteenth century (*The Savage of Aveyron*, the true story of a boy abandoned in the forest of Aveyron in France. Apparently somebody had tried to murder him, but he survived and lived by himself for an unspecified number of years. He was about twelve when he was found. Efforts to teach him to speak failed, but he could understand quite a lot when other people spoke. He also learnt how to read). Montessori argued that there was a ‘sensitive’ age for learning a language (between 2 and 7), and that language learning thereafter became more and more difficult until, by the age of twelve or thirteen, the ability almost disappeared. This is not the place to go into the merits of her observations. Perhaps there is some truth in the belief that very young children pick up languages spoken around them without needing to be taught, while older people need to be consciously taught the skills of language. It might also be true that adults never truly master the skills, especially the speaking skills. However, it is generally held that adults can learn languages, even if they have to try harder than young children, and that they need some formal instruction in the language.

74 Leo Van Lier, *Introducing Language Awareness*, (Penguin English, 1995) 2. People are not aware of language, which is like a highly permeable double screen through which ideas flow in both directions. It is a powerful instrument for communication, yet remains unobtrusive most of the time.
Ronald Carter and Walter Nash, *Seeing Through Language: A Guide to Styles of English Writing*, (Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1990). The title has two meanings, the first a literal one, namely, transparency in language, and the second an idiomatic one in the sense of uncovering a disguised or hidden (or deliberately distorted) area of interest.

D. Steinberg, *An Introduction to Psycholinguistics*, (Longman, 1993) Chapter Seven, passim. The matter is discussed in some detail in Chapter Seven of this book, and Steinberg comes to the conclusion that Chomsky would do well to drop the ‘universal grammar’ hypothesis altogether. The researcher does not feel competent to comment on this matter. It is bound to be controversial because it makes assertions about the inner workings of the brain, which cannot be seen, measured or evaluated. However, the mere fact that people can learn one another’s languages seems to support the proposition that although there are obvious differences in languages in the world today, these are but variations on a central theme, and that there is only one language as such. This might be so, but in view of Number 5 below (interference), which is much in evidence in Pakistan, the researcher feels that great care is required before tying the syllabus-making or teaching effort to any kind of theory or approach. Until they are validated by frequent testing and indubitable results, hypotheses are neither theories nor established facts, and must be treated with caution. This is a primary difficulty in all cognitive speculation. What goes on inside the brain can only be guessed at; it can never be measured or validated.
U. Weinrich, *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems*, (Mouton Press, The Hague, 1953) 14 and passim. Notice is taken of the phenomenon of ‘first language interference’ when languages come in contact. A lot of interference takes place between Urdu and English. This is partly because English is still viewed as an alien language, although this country has had it for a century and a half. Pakistanis feel more comfortable with the language when it is Urdu-ized and grafted on to the local culture. The interference is mostly of Urdu (and other local languages) on English, but the reverse process can sometimes be discerned. English words are used in Urdu in abundance in an odd-mixing manner. The effort to meld the two languages, which function on different grammatical premises, leads to anomalous constructions on both sides, very occasionally in Urdu, but quite frequently in English. Some people feel that a number of ‘inter languages’ are developing in Pakistan, the dominant one being that of Urdu and English. In time this might become a new Creole, with wide acceptance in the country. Although one can already observe a large influx of English words and terms into Urdu (they are used extensively in public signs, advertisements, government offices, etc.). People are reluctant to accept the fact of change and still talk about ‘pure’ forms of languages.


Winfred F. Hill, *Learning: a survey of psychological interpretations*, Harper and Row, 1985, 88-89. Wertheimer talked about ‘gestalts’ or patterns in the brain as early as 1912 and not much have come in later psychological theory to disprove his assumptions. Basically, the brain supplies patterns to what it perceives through the senses from its own resources. The reader is an active participant in the process, not a passive recipient. Meaning should be seen not as something the writer wants to say only, but as the product of a joint effort resulting from a dialogue between writer and reader, in which both sides take part. The active aspect of reading must be emphasized, as it is germane to everything that the researcher has stated in this thesis.

A successful reading operation can compensate for many things, inappropriate words, poor planning, ambiguity, shoddy presentation or faulty logic on the part of the writer. Scholars are not usually good writers, and some textbooks are formatted and conceived with little reference to the needs of the reader.
WORKS CITED


Berelson Bernard & A. Steiner Gary, *Human behavior; an inventory of scientific findings*, (New York, Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1964)

Bloomfield L., *Teaching Children to Read*, (In Bloom Field, Leonard and Barnhart, Clarence L., 1961)


Carbo M., Dunn R., & Dunn K., Teaching students to read through their individual learning styles. (Reston, VA: Prentice Hall, 1986)


Cashdan A., Language Reading and Learning, (London, Basil Blackwell Publisher Ltd.1979)

Chapman John, Comprehending and the Teacher of Reading (Newark, Delaware, Flood James (Ed), Promoting Reading comprehension, International Reading association, 1984)


Goodman, K.S., *Reading, Writing and Written text: A transactional socio-Psycholinguistic View*. (Newark D.E:In R.B. Ruddell,


Graves D., Writing: Teachers and children at work. (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1988)


Hafner, L.E., and Jolly, H.B., Patterns of teaching Reading in the elementary school. (New York, The Macmillan company, 1972)


Hassan Riaz, Aspects of Psycholinguistics, (The author 2002, National University of Modern Languages, 2002)

Heilman, Arthur W., Principles and practices of teaching Reading. (Ohio, Charles E. Mervill Publishing company, Columbus, 1957)


Holdaway Don, *Foundations of literacy*, (New York, Ashton Scholastic, 1979)


Montessori Maria, *The Discovery of the Child*, (Clio Oxford, 1988)


Rayner K. & A. Pollatsek, *The psychology of Reading*, (New Jersey Engle wood Cliffs, 1985)


Rhodes, L.K., & Dudley Marling, C., *Readers and writers with a difference: a holistic approach to teaching learning disabled and remedial students*, (Portsmouth, NH; Heinemann, 1988)


Russell David H., *The dynamics of Reading*, (Robert Ruddell, Editor Walthan, Mass; Ginn-Wlaisbell, 1970)

Russell David H., *The pre-requisite: Knowing how to read critically*, (Elementary English, 40 (6), 1963)


Spenser L.P., *The Reading Process and Types of Reading*, In 11th year book, (Claremont, Claremont College Reading Conference Yearbook, 1946)

Steinberg D., *An Introduction to Psycholinguistics*, (Longman, 1993)

Strang R., *The Nature of Reading*, (Milton Keynes, Open University 1977)

Thorndik Robert L., *The concepts of over and under achievements*, (New York; Teacher's college Press, Colombia University, 1963)


Zintz, M.V., *The Reading process*, (Debuque, w.m.c. Brown Company, 10, 1970)
ANNEXURE A
ANNEXURE A

The enclosed questionnaire was designed with four purposes in mind, (a) to ascertain how much teachers really know about the skills of reading, (b) to form an estimate of how well teachers use the English language themselves, (c) to determine how much translation is used at the secondary and graduate levels, and (d) to discover if any of the methods commonly recommended for enhancing the skills of reading are actually used in the two cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The opinions of teachers in a selected number of institutions in these two cities were solicited. A better sampling would have been achieved had institutions in rural areas been approached in addition to what was done for this study. However, informal reports indicated that the level of teachers was low, even in these relatively advanced urban areas, so the researcher thought it safe to conclude that the level in rural areas would be even lower. It was also valid to assume that Rawalpindi represented a middle to lower-middle class environment in which the Pakistani mesolect dominated, while Islamabad represented a middle to upper-middle class environment with elements drawn from all parts of the country, in which Pakistani dialects of English ranging from the mesolect to the acrolect would be found.

A third assumption, namely that these two cities constitute a valid urban microcosm of the country at large, is embedded in the working premises of this questionnaire. This assumption is arguable. There are people who suggest that larger cities such as Karachi and Lahore have certain advantages in ELT. However, the researcher feels that the observations derived from
responses to the enclosed questionnaire would not be challenged by many teachers of English in Pakistan, and that they are representative of conditions obtaining in most parts of the country at the moment.

An analysis of these matters has been made in Chapter Ten of this study. However, a perusal of the replies received from teachers (which are reproduced unchanged) will indicate that (a) very few teachers know anything about current reading theory and practice, (b) the language proficiency of many teachers is uncertain, (c) a great deal of reliance is placed on translation, even at graduate levels, and (d) even if teachers know something about beading, they rarely apply their knowledge.

With regard to (d) a whole panoply of questions arises, but no attempt has been made to answer them here, as they fall outside the scope of this thesis.
Questionnaire on “Reading skills in classroom practices”

Optional

What is your name? 

At what level do you teach reading?  Intermediate □  Graduate □  Postgraduate □

How long have you been teaching reading? 

What is the name of the institution? 

NOTE: Kindly answer all questions. If you do not know the answer to any question, clearly state “not known.”

1. Sequence the following English language skills in terms of importance, keeping in mind the needs of college students in Pakistan. (Kindly write a number against each skill, if all are equally important, please say so)
   a. Listening □
   b. Speaking □
   c. Reading □
   d. Writing □

2. Do you think reading is taught properly in your institution?
   a. Yes □  b. No □  c. Could be improved □

3. How is intensive reading taught in your institution? Write a short note.

4. How is extensive reading taught in your institution? Write a short note.

5. Approximately how much time per week is spent in the teaching of reading?

6. Is any attempt made to improve the basic skills of reading? (whole-phase scanning, silent reading, speed reading, guessing the meanings of words from context, guessing probable words in an incomplete text, etc)

7. Are any inference-type questions asked?
   a. Yes □  b. No □

8. How much Urdu (or regional language) is used in explaining English texts?

9. Is any kind of dictionary used?
   a. Yes □  b. No □

10. If answer to No. 9 is “yes”, what kind of dictionary is used?
    a. Monolingual (with defining vocabulary) □
    b. Monolingual (without a defining vocabulary) □
    c. Monolingual (with phonetic symbols for pronunciation) □
    d. Bilingual □
11. If the answer to No. 10 is ‘a’ or ‘b’, give reasons for using a monolingual dictionary.

12. If the answer to No. 10 is ‘c’, why is the pronunciation considered to be important? Write a short note.

13. If the answer to No. 10 is ‘d’, are you satisfied with the dictionary?
   a. Yes  □  b. No  □

14. Is any attempt made to instruct students in using a dictionary?
   a. Yes  □  b. No  □

15. What do you understand by ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ reading? Explain briefly.


17. Are the following kinds of exercises encouraged? Please check any or all of the following if applicable.
   a. Pre-reading (anticipatory questions)  □
   b. In-reading (continuous referencing)  □
   c. Post-reading (comprehension of the text)  □

18. Do you follow a ‘whole to parts’ or a ‘part to whole’ approach?

19. Do you use reading for the development of any other language skill?
   a. Yes  □  b. No  □

20. As a teacher do you think your primary job is to:
   a. Explain the text to students  □
   b. Encourage your students to understand the text through their own efforts  □

21. Are you satisfied with the results of your efforts?

22. Do you use reading for the teaching of grammar?  a. Yes  □  b. No  □

23. General remarks, if any:

Date:
Signature (Optional)
What is your name? Resheed Ahmad

At what level do you teach reading? Intermediate ☒ Graduate ☒ Postgraduate ☐

How long have you been teaching reading? 18 years

What is the name of the institution? F.G. S.S. Kyal College The Mall Rawp.

NOTE: Kindly answer all questions. If you do not know the answer to any question, clearly state “not known”.

1. Sequence the following English language skills in terms of importance, keeping in mind the needs of college students in Pak (Kindly write a number against each skill, if all are equally important, please say so)
   a. Listening ☒
   b. Speaking ☒
   c. Reading ☑
   d. Writing ☑

2. Do you think reading is taught properly in your institution?
   a. Yes ☒
   b. No ☐
   c. Could be improved ☐

3. How is intensive reading taught in your institution? Write a short note.
   By reading text in class and explaining it.

4. How is extensive reading taught in your institution? Write a short note.
   Ask students to read the text.

5. Approximately how much time per week is spent in the teaching of reading?
   40 min.

6. Is any attempt made to improve the basic skills of reading? (whole-phase scanning, silent reading, speed reading, guessing the meanings of words from context, guessing probable words in an incomplete text, etc)
   No special attempt.

7. Are any inference-type questions asked?
   a. Yes ☒
   b. No ☐

8. How much Urdu (or regional language) is used in explaining English texts?
   ☑

9. Is any kind of dictionary used?
   a. Yes ☐
   b. No ☒

10. If answer to No. 9 is “yes”, what kind of dictionary is used?
    a. Monolingual (with defining vocabulary) ☐
    b. Monolingual (without a defining vocabulary) ☐
    c. Monolingual (with phonetic symbols for pronunciation) ☐
    d. Bilingual ☐
12. If the answer to No. 10 is 'c', why is the pronunciation considered to be important? Write a short note.

13. If the answer to No. 10 is 'd', are you satisfied with the dictionary?
   a. Yes  
   b. No  

14. Is any attempt made to instruct students in using a dictionary?
   a. Yes  
   b. No  

15. What do you understand by 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' reading? Explain briefly.


17. Are the following kinds of exercises encouraged? Please check any or all of the following if applicable.
   a. Pre-reading (anticipatory questions)  
   b. In-reading (continuous referencing)  
   c. Post-reading (comprehension of the text)  

18. Do you follow a 'whole to parts' or a 'part to whole' approach?

19. Do you use reading for the development of any other language skill?
   a. Yes  
   b. No  

20. As a teacher do you think your primary job is to:
    a. Explain the text to students  
    b. Encourage your students to understand the text through their own efforts  

21. Are you satisfied with the results of your efforts?

22. Do you use reading for the teaching of grammar?
   a. Yes  
   b. No  

23. General remarks, if any:

   Most of what you have asked seems irrelevant in our language-teaching environment.

Date:  

Signature (Optional):
Questionnaire on “Reading skills in classroom practices”

Name: Muhammad Abbas

What level do you teach reading? Intermediate ☑ Graduate ☒ Postgraduate ☒

How long have you been teaching reading? For 15 years

What is the name of the institution? Govt. Gordon College, RWP.

NOTE: Kindly answer all questions. If you do not know the answer to any question, clearly state “not known”.

Sequence the following English language skills in terms of importance, keeping in mind the needs of college students in Pakistan. (Kindly write a number against each skill, if all are equally important, please say so)

- Listening ☐
- Speaking ☑
- Reading ☒
- Writing ☒

Do you think reading is taught properly in your institution?
- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☒
- c. Could be improved ☐

How is intensive reading taught in your institution? Write a short note.

The terms like intensive reading or extensive reading are totally unfamiliar to our students and even teachers. Just a few students of M.A. are a bit aware of them.

How is extensive reading taught in your institution? Write a short note. As above

Approximately how much time per week is spent in the teaching of reading?

More than half an hour on loud reading

Is any attempt made to improve the basic skills of reading? (whole-phase scanning, silent reading, speed reading, guessing the meanings of words from context, guessing probable words in an incomplete text, etc)

None of these terms apply.

Is applicable in our teaching system.

Are any inference-type questions asked?
- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☒

How much Urdu (or regional language) is used in explaining English texts?

Almost 100% ☐

Is any kind of dictionary used?
- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☒

If answer to No. 9 is “yes”, what kind of dictionary is used?
- a. Monolingual (with defining vocabulary) ☐
- b. Monolingual (without a defining vocabulary) ☐
- c. Monolingual (with phonetic symbols for pronunciation) ☐
- d. Bilingual ☐
If the answer to No. 10 is 'a' or 'b', give reasons for using a monolingual dictionary.

If the answer to No. 10 is 'c', why is the pronunciation considered to be important? Write a short note.

If the answer to No. 10 is 'd', are you satisfied with the dictionary?
  a. Yes  [ ]   b. No  [ ]

Is any attempt made to instruct students in using a dictionary?
  a. Yes  [ ]   b. No  [ ]

What do you understand by 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' reading? Explain briefly.

What do you understand by 'middle-across' reading? Explain briefly.

Are the following kinds of exercises encouraged? Please check any or all of the following if applicable.
  a. Pre-reading (anticipatory questions)  [ ]
  b. In-reading (continuous referencing)  [ ]
  c. Post-reading (comprehension of the text)  [ ]

Do you follow a 'whole to parts' or a 'part to whole' approach?  [ ]

Do you use reading for the development of any other language skill?
  a. Yes  [ ]   b. No  [ ]

As a teacher do you think your primary job is to:
  a. Explain the text to students  [ ]
  b. Encourage your students to understand the text through their own efforts  [ ]

Are you satisfied with the results of your efforts?  [ ]

Do you use reading for the teaching of grammar?
  a. Yes  [ ]   b. No  [ ]

General remarks, if any:

Date:  
Signature (Optional)
ANNEXURE B
Annexure B

Number 17

(Researcher’s note: the researcher preferred to introduce general frames of interest rather than ask set questions from a question-list. She did this through a short introductory statement indicated as ‘blocks’ in the following. This enabled respondents to expand on the matter in a flexible framework rather than insisting on strict ‘yes’ or ‘no’ responses. Some respondents wandered from the general frame. This was perfectly acceptable; as the researcher’s dominant purpose was to uncover psychological and sociological elements

General profile of Number 17:

The respondent was a married teacher in her middle forties with twelve years of teaching experience (July 2003). She completed the MA degree several years after marriage. She started teaching quite late in life, in her early thirties. She had no kind of teacher training either before or after starting her career. Her husband was (July 2003) a fairly senior medical doctor. She was somewhat harsh and impatient with her students and affected an indifference to the implications of her profession. These attitudes might have resulted from the fact that she did not ‘need’ the job financially,
but was doing it as a service to future generations, and to remain occupied now that her children had grown up.

**Researcher’s observations:**

This teacher seemed to resent the continuing presence of English in this society, although she was willing to concede the need for a world language. Basically a Pashto speaker, she used Urdu with a random interspersing of English words and phrases throughout the interview. At no time during the interview did she use English in a sustained dialogue, and the researcher was forced to consider the possibility that she was not able to do so, and that she indulged in a random mixing of languages in her normal mode of communication, presumably in the classroom as well. She used a lot of Urdu (and Pashto when she first started teaching) for explaining written texts in English to students. She was somewhat assertive and aggressive in her opinions: this might be one psychological manifestation of the obvious financial prosperity she enjoyed. She had little to say about reading skills and did not concede the need to isolate the skills of language. From non-verbal clues, the researcher was forced to conclude that, prior to the interview, this teacher had not heard of the four skills of language.
No 1. Translation and transcription of this respondent’s observations:

Block One:

(Researcher’s frame: “The term ‘psychology’ refers to a very wide range of interests, and includes behavioural, cognitive, emotional, pedagogical, familial, intra-relational and inter-relational features of personal and corporate living. One major concern of this study is the psychology of second-language learning, with special reference to the skills of reading. The researcher prefers to call English a second rather than a foreign language because it has a strong and continually growing presence in this society, at least for reading and writing, if not for listening and speaking”)

Responses of Number 17

English has no real roots in this society—we’ve been criminally negligent about developing our own languages. One reason for continuing low standards in the country is this blind insistence on English. The mother tongue should be used as the medium of instruction, and I don’t mean just for primary education but for all stages, school, college--everything, all the way to the end.

Yes, yes, I know all the arguments about needing a window on the world. However, what was a mere window should not have become a whole wall—a whole world, in
fact. We could have used translation if we needed information from other parts of the world, and it didn’t have to be restricted to the English language. This ‘one language’ obsession of ours has closed other windows. It could have been Chinese, Russian, French, Japanese—wherever we needed to go, in fact. However, it was even more important for us to develop our own languages—by now other people should have been translating from us, not we from them...I don’t know what your reactions are, but I try to keep the whole thing as localised as possible-- I think this is important.

Researcher’s comments: what is seen here is resentment that local values and skills should be ignored or downgraded in a perpetual (and usually unsuccessful) pursuit of foreign values and skills. This resentment is not uncommon among teachers. It would hardly be conducive to teaching the second language to Pakistani students, especially when accompanied by an inadequate understanding of the issues involved plus a general psychological and social climate of indifference and hostility. A wide-ranging programme of teacher training might help to reduce some of these negative psychological impediments, though it would probably not succeed in eliminating them altogether.
No 2. Translation and transcription of this respondent’s observations

BlockTwo:

(Researcher’s frame: "The general term ‘psychology’ would need to take cognisance of socio-cultural factors as well, since these factors impinge (sometimes decisively) on the performance, aptitudes and attitudes of the second language learner. It is possible to view an individual as an isolated individual, but only up to a point. The social perspective cannot be ignored. A fairly broad perspective has to be maintained in studies of this nature. A very large matrix of interlocking (and often mutually neutralizing) factors comes into view when the matter is viewed steadily. A strict segregation of factors is not possible. It is desirable to identify the key conditions and functions in the two areas of psychology and sociology, with a continuous bias towards questions related to language learning")

Responses of Number 17

Look, you may be right—I don’t know as much about it as you do. To my way of thinking studies like these (I’m not criticizing you) waste time unless they can address the day-to-day reality of the thing. Teaching means rolling up your sleeves and teaching, nothing more, nothing less. There are hundreds of little problems related to this ongoing clash of different languages that need to be met and solved every day--
these are real, concrete problems, not airy, philosophical ones. That’s the teacher’s real job. You learn to swim by swimming, not by talking about it. Students learn to read by reading. I don’t agree that reading is the most important skill. I think speaking is more important—or not less important. I think all the skills are important. In fact, I don’t understand why you want to cut the language up like this. Students should be able to use English for expressing thoughts as required and when required in natural situations. Yes, I use Urdu whenever I need to in the classroom, which is quite often, yes—in fact, at one time, before we moved here, I used both Pashto and Urdu. I’ve had no complaints—I think my approach is a workable one for conditions in this country. I think I do a fairly good job with my students. Ask them. I usually get good results.

Researcher’s comments: This teacher wandered from the researcher’s suggested frame of reference, but this did not matter. She had evolved what she thought was a workable teaching formula characterized by reducing the matter to English and Urdu paraphrases, dictating notes and giving explanations in Urdu. She saw no reason to change it. Her justification was that this approach was in line with the real situation and with educational expectations in Pakistan. She was somewhat aggressively defensive in her posture with regard to these matters. She had no time for what she called ‘airy, philosophical’ theories, and, although she did not say so overtly, was resentful of the presence of English as a kind of linguistic interloper in a nation that had long ago opted for Urdu as its primary tongue. However, it was possible to detect some resentment even towards Urdu, as she felt that the mother tongue (in her case
Pushto) of each person was and ought to have been the primary tongue for all citizens of the country.

Her teaching approach can be described as the standard Pakistani approach. This is ‘teaching to the No 3. Translation and transcription of this respondent’s observations test’ in which the final examination is the first, last and only consideration. It is well received by students because it helps them to get through examinations without the daunting drudgery of language learning. This approach can be described as ‘norm-based’ in that it makes concessions to the generally low levels of students without making a real attempt to pull them upwards to desirable and demonstrable levels of competence. It is not ‘criterion based’ in trying to inculcate a feeling for the language and insisting on some real ability in it.

**Block 3**

(Researcher’s frame: “The researcher takes it as axiomatic that foreign or second language learning is invariably assayed in an environment that is socially, linguistically and culturally different from that in which first language learning takes place, and that motivation behind learning the second language is different from that of the first language”)

Responses of Number 17

Of course! That’s what I’ve been saying, right from the beginning. This is Pakistan, not America. It’s a different country with its own peculiarities. We have to look to our own needs, motivations, limitations and compulsions—I don’t need to tell you, you’re an active teacher yourself-- there are plenty of limitations and compulsions. I agree that a more complete survey needs to be done of conditions in this country so that we can adjust our teaching patterns accordingly. But the reality today is in front of you—these are British and American theories you are talking about. I don’t think they suit this country. Give me a workable Pakistani theory that fits painlessly into this society’s educational categories. Have you got one to offer?

Researcher’s observations: This teacher was inward looking in her attitudes and approaches. The implications of the basic frame are fairly wide, in that due notice is to be taken of psychological and socio-cultural elements in evolving viable reading approaches suitable for the country. These implications form the foundation of this study. Number 17 did not enlarge upon them, but was generally in agreement that conditions in Pakistan were different from those abroad, asserting that this was obvious, and that it was merely an echo of what she had been trying to say from the beginning.
The researcher's stance is somewhat similar to those of this teacher in that more studies of the situation in Pakistan are required so that workable suggestions can be made. However, with regard to primary theory, the researcher does not think that Pakistan needs to repeat ab initio what has been done in considerable detail under better research conditions abroad. Adaptation from ideas hypothesized (and to a reasonable extent validated) in research studies done abroad, is likely to be more useful than a total process from bare beginnings through a parallel cycle of trial-and-error repeated under generally less favourable circumstances in this country. The researcher has looked at foreign theorizing and experimentation, not as ends in themselves, but as starting points for exploring what can be done in Pakistan. She has not rejected them only because they are foreign, as this respondent seems to have done.

No 4. Translation and transcription of this respondent's observations

Block 4

(Researcher's frame: "The difference is exacerbated in direct proportion to the physical distance involved, and to the relative strangeness of cultural factors operating in the respective societies. Briefly learning to read in English in Pakistan is not (and cannot be) the same as learning to read in English in Britain or America. This
statement is equally true of learning to listen, speak or write in the second language, but the primary focus here is on reading skills.”

Responses of Number 17

I don’t know what you’re trying to do by talking about separate skills in this way. We have to teach the subject called English. You can’t teach reading by itself, up in the air, without some talking-- talking is not much good unless your students understand what you are saying. You need some writing as well, quite a lot of it. They all go hand in hand. I don’t think I agree with what you’re trying to say. Of course, conditions here are different—there’s no need to repeat this--I agree absolutely.

Researcher’s observations: The idea of isolating one skill of language and giving it greater pedagogical importance in the light of psycho-socio-cultural factors operating in a given society was obviously strange for some respondents, this one included. In fact, although she did not say so, she had probably thought of a language as ‘knowledge’ of a set of grammatical rules plus some vocabulary, and not as a set of related skills.

However, at no time did the researcher state that reading and reading only should be taught in Pakistan. What she tried to show was that all the skills of a second language were not equally important in a given society at a given time in its history, and that reading in English was more important for young Pakistanis today than, say, speaking
it. There was a tendency to react to extreme positions among many of her respondents, this one included.

**Summary:** In total, twenty-five teachers actively engaged in the teaching of reading were interviewed in a similar way. Two other samples, including one of a male teacher, are appended with this thesis as Annex 3.

Number 17 was selected as a case study at this point because she was vocal and inclined to be inflexible in her attitudes and prejudices, feeling, perhaps, that a survey of this nature was an indirect threat to her infallibility and reputation as a teacher. Aware of the general sensitivity of teachers on this score, the researcher tried her best to reduce tensions and remove all hint of criticism, implied or overt, when she spoke to them.
Number 6

Profile:

The respondent was a male teacher in his late thirties. He had been teaching English for eleven years (June 2003), seven of which were entirely at the intermediate level and four at both the intermediate and bachelor levels. He spoke in a mixture of English and Urdu with an obtrusive Punjabi bias. The quality of his English was low-to-medium in both grammar and phonology, but he was able to maintain a fairly fluent stream of communication in a random mixture of languages. His responses have been rendered in English by the researcher. When asked if teaching was his profession by choice, he stated emphatically that in his twenties he had twice applied unsuccessfully for the administrative services, that he found teaching underpaid, frustrating and unrewarding, but that he did it mainly because he had a family to support. He had no pre or in-service training in the teaching of English. As in most institutions round the country, possession of the MA degree in English (which is heavily biased towards English literature and which is a knowledge-oriented rather than a skill-development programme of studies) was considered enough for teaching the language.

Researcher’s observations: This teacher was cynical and indifferent in his attitudes. Like other male teachers interviewed for this study, he downgraded the teaching profession, and, presumably, did only as much as he needed to do to
maintain his job. His own Urdu-medium background showed up strongly in his spoken English. The researcher was not able to make an estimate of his literacy skills in the language, but feels that the typical deviations of such speakers caused by interference from Urdu, would show up in his written English also. In any case, his English was not of a high standard.

No 1: Translation and transcription of this respondent's observations

Block One:

(Researcher's frame: "The term 'psychology' refers to a very wide range of interest, and includes behavioural, cognitive, emotional, pedagogical, familial, intra-relational and inter-relational features of personal and corporate living. One major concern of this study is the psychology of second language learning, with special reference to the skills of reading. The researcher prefers to call English a second rather than a foreign language because it has a strong and continually growing presence in this society, at least for reading and writing, if not for listening and speaking.")
Responses of Number 6

I don’t know if we need to give labels—foreign language, second language—what difference does it make? Does it make any difference to the way we teach it? You have to learn this compulsory language the hard way—nobody speaks it as his first language. I can’t see the point of these definitions, and I can’t see how they affect the real status of the language or how we’re expected to teach it. I don’t have much time for these things. In fact, I can’t see the point of such studies—the reality of the situation is overwhelming. It’s ludicrous. It’s horrible. It’s pitiable. I have X number of assignments to complete every term, scores of them. I go through the motions, struggle with them every term, finish them somehow or the other. Of course, I’m not satisfied. Who would be? But we have to make compromises at every step or nothing happens at all. You talk about social conditions? You should see the real level of the students we get here. Most of them are young thugs with no interest whatsoever in English—or any subject, if you ask me. Some of them come from well-to-do families—you should see the vehicles, Land-Cruisers and things—it isn’t that these boys are all poor or anything—but you see—there’s no background. It’s the families also. Nobody’s interested in education. In the last ten years I’ve come across perhaps six or seven students—out of hundreds I’ve met—who actually wanted to improve their English. The rest—what can I say? I remember when I first started a long time ago—the class had something like a hundred students, and I would look up from taking the roll-call to see that half of the students had jumped out of the windows. That’s the
level of commitment and motivation we get here, so what are we talking about? I’m happy if I can teach a few sentences here or there. Forget about these theories.

**Researcher’s observations:** The respondent wandered somewhat from the researcher’s frame, but this did not matter. The psycho-sociological attitudes encountered here are not uncommon, and it is true that some institutions go through the motions of education without the fact of it. This respondent’s complaint that half of his class used to jump out of the windows might be an exaggeration, but confirmation can be made from unobtrusive observations of some schools and colleges. Teachers from institutions other than the few elite ones in the region often have similar stories to tell. The key phrase here is ‘unobtrusive observation’, because a formal inspection tour usually puts all people on their best behaviour, at least as long as the inspection lasts.

Two basic principles are assumed for the success of any educational programme, *punctuality* and *discipline*. These principles are operative at all levels, administrative and academic. These are often conspicuous by their absence, reflecting widespread and thoroughly undesirable social attitudes and practices that have encroached on the field of education over the last half century. This reinforces the researcher’s basic observation that education does not exist in a vacuum and that *psycho-socio-cultural* factors have to be identified and remedied as far as possible if improved capabilities in the skills of language, especially in those of reading, are desired. However, though
crucial, questions of institutional discipline and morale fall outside the scope of this study.

No 2: Translation and transcription of this respondent’s observations

Block Two

(Researcher’s frame: “The general term ‘psychology’ would need to take cognizance of socio-cultural factors as well, since these factors impinge (sometimes decisively) on the performance, aptitudes and attitudes of the second language learner. It is possible to view an individual as an individual, but only up to a point. The social perspective cannot be ignored. A failry broad perspective has to be maintained in studies of this nature. A very large matrix of interlocking (and often mutually neutralizing) factors comes into view when the matter is viewed steadily. A strict segregation of factors is not possible. It is desirable to identify the key conditions and functions in the two areas of psychology and sociology, with a continuous bias towards questions related to language learning”)

Responses of Number 6

If your statement is what I think it is, I've already answered your question. Family background is important, even more so than money. You talk about social factors, social values? Of course they are important—but only if there are values. This is an almost valueless society. When I try to talk about social virtue, civic responsibility or educational ideals inside or outside the classroom, my students simply laugh at me.

The other day one of my colleagues, a senior teacher, a very senior teacher, gave me a lift in his car. He jumped lights, ignored signals, overtook other vehicles on the wrong side, wove in and out of the traffic and broke every rule of the road. I said nothing, because that's exactly what every other driver within my range of vision was doing. I don't know what I would do if I owned a car—the same, probably. I would have to, wouldn't I, if I wanted to get home?

What could I possibly say? He's a respected teacher, not a criminal or anything—he's the product of this society—all of us are, students included. The social atmosphere affects everyone, but tell me, when senior teachers cannot maintain any regard for rules if they want to survive, who's going to set about re-educating this society? I think it has slipped too far down the spiral. I agree with every word. Social factors intrude most destructively on every aspect of education—I say, the main thing—the real question is, can anybody do anything about these negative factors? I can't, certainly. Don't expect me as a teacher to give sermons about values that mean
nothing to young members of this society—they are already strongly conditioned to diametrically opposed things that they see working much better for people around them.

**Researcher’s comment:** the initial reaction to such comments is to dismiss them as typical of ‘teacher dissatisfaction’, which is fairly common. However, social factors that affect the psychology of teachers should not be ignored. If one is to look for the pivotal factor in the whole complex of education, the role of the teacher is probably central. At the same time, the teacher cannot escape the effects of what goes on around him. One implicit hypothesis of this study is that while the individual does have some effect on society, s/he inevitably acts within a certain social context, and that the range of factors the individual encounters is much stronger than his or her personal effect. If the context changes, the individual functions differently. This respondent, perhaps unwittingly, touched upon a sensitive problem. Many people expect teachers to be the purveyors and anchors of social values for future generations, yet many teachers in ordinary institutions find they cannot assume such a role because the conditions they find themselves in and the pressures to which they are subjected make it almost impossible for them to maintain it. The result is a reaction of cynicism and hostility towards this ‘noble’ profession.
No 3: *Translation and transcription of this respondent’s observations*

**Block three**

*(Researcher’s frame: “The researcher takes it as axiomatic that foreign or second language learning is invariably assayed in an environment that is socially, linguistically and culturally different from that in which first language learning takes place, and that the motivation behind learning the second language is different from that of the first language”)*

**Responses of Number 6**

This is almost the same as the previous one, isn’t it? I think what you said is self-evident. It is correct, no doubt about that. The main thing is to understand that since we do not have the same environment we should think of ways and means that suit this environment, and not keep talking about theories and ideas that suit other environments. What those ways and means are is another story, and I’m afraid I can’t help you there. I haven’t enough time to sit thinking up theories for this society. Also, I know that any effort I make by myself will be ignored or derided by the authorities, so I keep to myself, stick to time-tested formulas, and do what I have to do. They say it is a noble profession, but I need my salary. These are the facts. I’d like to pretend
that I’m some kind of dedicated, idealistic teacher, but I know I’m not. And I know nearly all my colleagues are the same. Did I say ‘nearly all’? I should have said ‘all’.

**Researcher’s observations:** The foregoing comments do not need much analysis. They reveal a kind of psychological cynicism encountered among teachers—this might be the product of conditions found generally in institutions and society in the country, or it might be simply a confirmation of something that already exists and is exacerbated by subsequent experiences. The researcher feels that these attitudes are destructive of good teaching, without which not much will happen to improve standards in second-language learning in educational institutions. A shortage of knowledge, a shortage of motivation and a deficient desire to improve are visible here. Unfortunately this kind of indifference is not uncommon. The researcher sensed something like this in sixteen of her respondents, and in all six of the male respondents. If the psychology of the teacher is not positive, not much can be expected.

**No 4: Translation and transcription of this respondent’s observations**

**Block Four**

*(Researcher’s frame: “The difference is exacerbated in direct proportion to the physical distance involved, and to the relative strangeness of cultural factors operating in the respective societies.*
Briefly, learning to read in English in Pakistan is not (and cannot be) the same as learning to read in English in Britain or America. This statement is equally true of learning to listen, speak or write in the second language, but the main focus is on reading skills.

Responses of Number Six

I suppose we should look more deeply into these factors. Frankly, I haven’t thought much about them myself. I’m more like a foot soldier, not a campaign planner. I’m not allowed to think—I have to fire the gun made by other people in the direction pointed out to me by other people. If I try to do things by myself I might lose my job or get posted to some backward village for daring to voice my opinions. My job is to teach according to a given syllabus and to try and get as many students through the examination as possible. English is an impediment for many of them. It seems unfair that even good students sometimes fail just because of English. They might be very good at other subjects but because of a poor grounding in English, they get bad marks. The nation loses a lot of talent because of this general failure with English.

I’m not sure I agree with you about giving extra importance to reading skills, but you might be right. You might be right—mostly we use English as a storehouse of knowledge. This business needs to be worked out in detail. Just because that is the way we use English, is not an argument for how we should use it. However, I am not in a position to agree or disagree because I don’t know much about these things.
Researcher's observations: The respondent hardly bothered to understand the implications of the frame, but some stimulus was received from it for a train of thought, and this was acceptable. The method of presenting frames rather than asking questions was used by the researcher for just this purpose. She accepted all kinds of responses as indicative of teacher psychology.

Once again the researcher noticed some puzzlement on the part of teachers that a language should be divided into different skills in this way. The feeling she got was that most teachers of English did not know about these things, at least not among the few she interviewed in a limited area of Pakistan. Some teachers quickly accepted the idea because they did not wish to admit their ignorance, but many of them questioned the premise that skills could or should be taught consciously or separately.

The idea that society was to ‘blame’ for many educational shortcomings was generally well received, because it provided a readymade excuse for poor performance. “Change society and other things will fall in place” is a convenient though unrealistic slogan: it evades the question and does not address it. The concept of ‘society’ is too large, vague and abstract—it is better to talk in terms of cultural and social factors that can be seen or sensed, even if they cannot be defined accurately. The slogan is unrealistic because social and cultural reform is a slow, grudging process with no guarantee of success. However, social factors have to be taken into account, because everything moves in context.
ANNEXURE C
- Chance was not given to me to read in the class.
- For this reason I had a lack of confidence.
- I was not able to pronounce the difficult words.
- I was afraid that if I will be wrong teacher will punish me. So when ever Teacher asked for reading I never raised my hand.
- Some of the teacher were not well trained, instead of giving chance to her students she used to read herself. We learned words in the way teacher used to pronounce.
- One of my teacher never opened his book in the class, when I was in 8th class. Even I did not know the name of the book. He use to come out just give oral lecture, so in this case there was no reading improvement far away.
- One of the main factor or fault is that I never tried
Reading Comprehension Problems:

When we read a foreign language we have to face number of problems.
- We come across such words, which are totally unfamiliar to us, so we cannot predict their meanings.
- Secondly there are so many words from other languages such as French, Latin etc. which make this process of comprehension more difficult.
- Some words are used in figurative and literal meaning, which are difficult to understand.
- Our from the very beginning, of our reading skill is not emphasized.
- Lack of interest and motivation is another factor for not comprehending the reading passage.
- We do not spare time for reading daily. So due to lack of practice we face such problems.
- The method of teaching English vary from level lower level to higher.
Being a Pakistani we feel a number of problems while reading English Language. The problems arise because it is not our native language. I'd like to mention a few problems through my own experience.

Slow reading and little vocabulary is the major cause. Slow reading speed does not enable us to cover the given work in time. Similarly, while reading when difficult or new words come across we always try to find its meaning and then proceed further. It also reduces the reading speed.

At times we are fed up of finding meanings again and again and we feel exhausted. This also reduces the interest.

Another major problem is that we are so much tired of daily routine and when we try to study even a simpler topic, we are unable to understand it. Reading is also affected by the repetition of same ideas.

Sometimes it is happen that our mind is thinking about something else and at the same time we try to read the book. It is natural that we will not be able to comprehend it. This is because a mind can accept one thing at a time.