CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

Self-perception and self-efficacy are very closely related to the academic achievement of an individual. Equipped with this knowledge, teachers could tailor classroom instructions to suit the individual's needs.

2.1 Self-Perception, Self-Efficacy and Academic Achievement

Valencia (1990) referred to perception of self as reader as "self-evaluation of a reader". Perception of self as a reader would influence the reading achievement. It had been found that children who had positive associations with reading would tend to have a higher self-perception as a reader than one who felt negatively about reading. This in turn would affect their reading engagements. Children who were not motivated and had low interest in reading would usually continue to feel so even after they left school.

According to Bandura (1977, 1982), self-efficacy was defined as a person's judgement of her or his ability to perform an activity and the effect this perception had on the ongoing and future conduct of the activity. Schunk (1982, 1983a, 1983b) had stated that self-perceptions were likely to either motivate or inhibit learning. In short, self-perception would have a strong impact on an individual's orientation toward the reading process. Children who have good self-perception as readers would be motivated and have high interest in reading tasks. By contrast,
children who perceived themselves as poor readers would not look forward to reading. It was very clear that the way an individual felt about herself or himself as a reader would influence their behaviour towards reading and how persistently comprehension would be pursued (Henk, & Melnick, 1995).

Affect and motivation played a significant role in reading (Frager, 1993). The act of reading called upon a learner's dimension of cognitive hierarchies. These dimensions depended upon inner resources that were affective, such as interest, self-confidence, control of negative feelings and procrastination, and willingness to take risks.

The prereading phase was considered vital, as the single most important factor influencing new learning was what the learner already knew (Ausubel, 1968). New understandings of prereading activities could be gained by looking at their affective dimensions. One of these with great value in the prereading stage is confidence. For prereading activities to have the intended cognitive benefit, readers need to feel confident that they have prior knowledge about a subject, a feeling too frequently lacking. This is due to our education system where classroom rewards were given only for right answers. By lacking in confidence of one's ability in reading, the student would have a low perception of oneself as a reader.
Nicholls (1979) found that ability attributions for success and failure were predicted more accurately in reading achievement in older children as compared to younger children. Perception of own achievement was more accurate in older children. Children by the age of 12, with a history of performing better than peers at a given activity were likely to attribute any given high performance to high ability and thus to expect success on future tasks. If high performance did subsequently occur, it would again be attributed to high ability. A history of poor performance relative to others would, on the other hand, lead to attribution of success to good luck or high effort and attribution of failure to poor ability.

According to Schunk (1982), when persons believed that increased effort would produce success, they should persist longer at the task and thereby increased the level of their performance. Persons who periodically failed but showed improvements over time were more likely to raise their percepts of efficacy than people who succeeded but saw their performance leveled off compared with their previous improvement (Bandura, 1981). Schunk's study on effects of effort attributional feedback on children's perceived self-efficacy and achievement provided evidence that attributional feedback linking past achievement with effort promoted task involvement, skill development and perceived self-efficacy.

Covington and Omelich (1979b) found that success associated with high effort led to lower self-attributions of ability but to greater pride and satisfaction as compared to lower effort. Although students preferred that their successes be
attributed to both high ability and high effort, they would rather be viewed as having high ability rather than having expended great effort. Thus, while achieving success implied ability, success achieved with hard work might not promote one's sense of personal efficacy. Even though effort promoted pride and satisfaction, it was not the preferred means of achieving.

Young children valued high ability and high effort (Harari, & Covington, 1981) and they used both to explain success in achievement contexts. In the self-efficacy model, attributional feedback constituted a persuasive means of conveying efficacy information. Telling children that they possessed the ability should support their perceptions of progress and help validate their sense of efficacy. It was predicted that ability feedback alone would promote self-efficacy more than effort feedback alone.

Based on Schunk's (1983a) study, providing attributional feedback alone to children in the context of competency development constituted an effective means of promoting rapid problem solving, self-efficacy and achievement. As children observed their problem-solving progress during training, they began to develop a sense of efficacy. Providing attributional feedback helped to support their self-perceptions of progress and validated their sense of efficacy (Schunk, 1982). When children received no attributional feedback, they might wonder how efficacious they were despite their progress. Children who received only ability
feedback judged themselves the most efficacious and solved correctly the highest number of problems.

Kanoy, Johnson and Kanoy (1980) in a study of academically bright children concluded that a positive relationship between academic achievement and self-concept was more likely to occur with an academic self-concept measure. Purkey (1970) noted that studies carried out to examine the effects of success and failure on an individual's self-concept had frequently reported that those who underachieve scholastically frequently suffered significant losses in their self-esteem. Ames (1978) demonstrated this in his experimental study on elementary school children. The results of the study revealed that the self-esteem of high self-concept children were brightened following experiences of success. Conversely, failure experiences had negative effects on the children's self-esteem.

Kifer (1975) however contended that it was the pattern of success or failure and the accumulation of these experiences that had a more significant effect on an individual self-concept. This was demonstrated in his quasi- longitudinal study on the academic achievement and personality characteristics of students from grades 2 to 8. He reported that children in the lower grades showed a uniformly high level of self-concept of ability, but this declined rapidly over the years as a result of consistent failure while those experiencing consistent success were able to maintain their self-concept of ability.
Results from a study carried out by Chapman and Lambourne (1990) concluded that academic self-concept is primarily the result of different levels of school achievement and experiences of schooling, involving comparison with others and receiving feedback about academic performance is likely to be the main factor in the development of academic self-concept. Similarly, Brookover and his associates (1967) concluded from their study that changes in the students' self-concept of ability were associated with parallel changes in academic achievement.

Studies in Singapore had also shown that students' academic achievement were also positively and significantly related to their academic self-concept. Yee's (1992) study also revealed that students with a better history of academic achievement tend to have a more positive academic self-concept and attributed their academic outcomes more to their effort and less to their ability. Similarly, Yeoh's (1990) findings also showed that self-concept is highly related to academic achievement and expectations. In studies involving Primary Six students in Singapore, Ng (1985) also found academic achievement and self-concept of academic ability to have a correlation ranging from 0.18 to 0.44, while Daulath (1985) found these correlations to range from 0.34 to 0.49. Lui (1987) also found out in his study among lower secondary students that academic scores correlate positively with self-concept ($r = .42$) and with academic self-concept ($r = .31$).
Based on the above studies, it can be concluded that self-perception is positively correlated with academic achievements. High achievers tend to have high self-perception in contrast to low achievers. This perceived self-perception would influence their performance and their likely success rate in the future. There are a few factors that influence a person's self-perception. One of these is past performance feedback. A student who has been experiencing a long history of successes will be motivated to experience more successes in the future as he knows that he has the ability to do so. His affective factors such as interest and self-confidence will also contribute to his perceived self-perception.

On the other hand, a student who has been experiencing a string of failures in his studies will tend to lack confidence in his ability and may even give up trying. Any experiences of success by him will likely to be attributed to luck rather than ability. These failure experiences will have negative effects on the student's self-perception and later on his outlook in life. Other factors that lead to the development of academic self-concept will include feedback from others such as peers, teachers and parents plus comparison with the others.
2.2 The Development of Reader Self-Perception Scale

Over the past decade, educational psychologists had shown increasing interest in the influence of personal cognitions on achievement (Bandura, 1982; Schunk, 1984). One type of personal cognition that had been examined with considerable rigor was perceived self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1982). Perceived self-efficacy referred to personal judgements of performance capabilities within a given domain of activity that served either to motivate or inhibit learning (Schunk, 1982, 1983a, 1983b; Zimmerman, & Ringle, 1981).

In the field of reading, perceived self-efficacy had received rather scant attention (Cohen, McDonell, & Osborn, 1989). The dearth of inquiry was surprising insofar as the construct would appear to be intimately tied to reading behaviour. That is, an individual's perception of self as a reader might affect whether opportunities to read would be sought or avoided, the amount of effort that would be expended during reading, and the degree of persistence demonstrated in pursuing text comprehension. Collectively, these factors could exert a sizeable impact on continued growth in reading ability, particularly in the formative stages of skill and strategy acquisition (Henk, & Melnick, 1992).

In forming these self-estimates of one's capability as a reader, individuals were believed to take into account their perceptions of a wide array of indicators. These indicators were thought to include; past personal reading performance, the degree of ongoing progress, the relative performance of peers, the difficulty or
case of various reading tasks, feedback from credible sources, the quality of reading instruction they have received, internal physiological responses to reading, and situational circumstances such as teacher assistance, mode of reading, and working conditions (Schunk, 1985).

Before the development of a scale to measure "perception of self as reader" by Henk and Melnick, there was no truly and reliable scale existed. Those existing self-efficacy scales tend to measure achievement globally rather than in reading-specific manner. Moreover, those few scales that did address readers' perceived self-efficacy were characterised by very few items, many of which measured the construct marginally at best. Another major problem with the scales was that few had been normed in anything resembling a systematic, empirical fashion. Hence, appropriate internal consistency and factor analytic procedures had not been invoked to ensure proper validity and reliability parameters or factors loadings that detected both expected and unexpected subscales. A functional scale that would validly and reliably measure self-efficacy perceptions in reading had to be developed. The resulting scale should be extremely useful as either a dependent measure, a blocking variable or a covariate in experimental studies, or as a trait indicator in descriptive studies and be known as the Reader Self-Perception Scale (RSPS).
The construction of the Reader Self-Reader Scale followed affective scales' development guidelines as described by Gable (1986). The steps included:
(a) developing conceptual and operational definitions, (b) selecting a scaling technique, (c) conducting a judgmental review of items, (d) selecting a response format, (e) preparing drafts of the instrument and gathering pilot data, (f) analysing the data (using techniques of reliability estimation and item analysis), and (g) collecting ongoing validity and reliability data (Henk, & Melnick, 1992).
The item writing was guided by four major categorical sources of information thought to be related to reader self-efficacy: Performance, Observational Comparison, Social Feedback, and Physiological States (Bandura, 1982; Schunk, 1984).

Because the Performance category was depicted in the professional literature as multidimensional, its corresponding items centred on various aspects of reading including past performances, ease or difficulty, effort expenditure, task persistence, personal progress, and avoidance. The Observational Comparison items were aimed at self-perceptions of reading ability based on how other children perform. Social Feedback items tapped direct and indirect feedback from credible human sources, whereas Physiological States items derived from bodily feedback such as relaxation and discomfort. The resulting pool addressed reading-related indicators by embedding notions such as fluency, word recognition, word analysis, comprehension, reading rate, and oral and silent reading within items (Blumenfield,

2.2.1 Why RSPS?

Somewhat surprisingly, there had been very few attempts to develop instruments for measuring reader’s self-perceptions. The few scales that did exist definitely had their merits, but all possessed some notable limitations (Boersma, Chapman, & Mac Guire, 1979; Cohen, McDonell, & Osborn, 1989; Mitman, & Lash, 1988). For instance, some scales measured self-perceptions of general achievement or language arts proficiency, but did not focus on reading achievement specifically. Others had very few items, and these items tend to measure reader self-efficacy indirectly at best. Often, major elements of reading such as word recognition, word analysis, fluency, and comprehension were not represented in the item pool as they were in the Reader Self-Perception Scale.

Another major problem with many of the scales was that they had not undergone adequate norming. Some were based on small samples, and others had not considered possible scales. A further major concern was that none of the existing reader self-perception instruments appeared to be grounded in learning theory. By contrast, the RSPS took its lead from a well regarded learning-theory framework and was steeped in a solid tradition of supportive research in the affective domain.
Although previous quantitative scales had fallen short of the mark, several useful structured interview formats were available for qualitative assessment of individual readers' self-perceptions. Individual data collections could be extremely informative, but they tend to be time consuming and therefore of somewhat less practical value. To date, only the group-administered Reader Self-Perception Scale accounted adequately for concerns related to focus, norming, theoretical grounding, and practicality. Beyond these advantages, the RSPS offered a wide range of assessment, instructional, and research applications (Henk, & Melnick, 1995).

The RSPS was chosen to be used in this study as the items in this instrument were specially developed to measure reading achievement. This instrument was also based on a well-regarded learning-theory framework, that was the self-efficacy theory by Bandura and had been tested for reliability and validity.

2.3 Learning Theories in Educational Practices

In reading comprehension, the reader must be able to grasp the general idea of the problems presented before problem solving skills are being applied. As stated by Pittenger and Gooding (1971), problem solving was a process that involved the reorganisation of perceptions. The relationships between problems
and their solutions were interactive, in that the way a problem was solved depended on the way it was perceived. Gestalt-oriented teacher would always emphasise on totality or whole and not on individual parts. A gestaltist would stress on meaningfulness and understanding. They viewed unsolved problems as creating ambiguity or an organisational disbalance in the student's mind, a condition that was unnatural. Ambiguity was looked upon as a negative state that persisted until a problem was solved. In discovery learning, which was founded by Brunner, the student who was confronted with a problem, would either seek new information or would rearrange old information till he gained insight into the solution of the problem.

The Gestalt classroom would be characterised by a give-and-take relationship between student and teacher (Hergenhahn, 1976). The teacher helped the student see relations and to organise his experiences into meaningful patterns. Planning a Gestalt learning experience included starting with something familiar and basing each step in the educational process on those already taken.

Piaget stated that educational experiences must be built around the learner's cognitive structure. Educational material that could not be assimilated into a child's cognitive structure would not have any meaning to the child. In order for learning to take place, the material needed to be partially known and partially unknown. Again, what was theorised by Piaget was similar to the Gestalt approach. The part that was known would be assimilated and the part that was unknown would
necessitate a slight modification in the child's cognitive structure. Such modification is referred to as accommodation. Accommodation could be roughly equated with learning.

Thus, for Piaget, optimal education involved mildly challenging experiences for the learner so that the dual processes of assimilation and accommodation could provide for intellectual growth. In order to create that kind of experience, the teacher must know the level of functioning of each student's cognitive structure. Since cognitive structure would tend to vary from child to child, so would the material needed to stimulate intellectual growth.

In reading comprehension and reading strategies, deep consideration should be taken on the processes that happened in the cognition when learning took place. Any malfunction in the process of learning would not allow learning to take place. Students have to be taught to be aware of the metacognitive processes that happened in their mind during reading.

2.4 Metacognition in Reading Comprehension

Although teachers had considerable success in helping pupils to use personal experiences while reading, they had been less successful in getting pupils to spontaneously apply strategies to class materials. Conscious control of effective strategies independent of the teacher was not always realised (McNeil, 1984).
One of the purposes in reading comprehension is to look at promising approaches to the difficult task of teaching pupils both to be aware of the reading strategies they are using and to monitor their own reading. These approaches relate to metacognition. In reading, metacognition transcends cognition by enabling individuals not just to use particular strategies, but to be aware of the importance of these strategies and how to appraise them. Metacognition emphasises broad control processes rather than highly specific task strategies. It addresses the problems of pupils who have been taught appropriate strategies for comprehending but fail to employ them.

Metacognitive processes in reading are:

a. self-knowledge - recognising one's strengths and weaknesses in comprehending. The child's view of self as a reader is an instance.

b. task-knowledge - knowing the importance of matching a comprehension task with an appropriate reading or memory strategy. Appreciation of having a perceived purpose for reading, a plan for action, and ways to assess progress and to revise are important parts of task knowledge.

c. self-monitoring - being aware whether one has or has not understood the text and knowing the value of what to do when failing to comprehend. The so-called "debugging" practices of backtracking
and reading ahead when incomprehensible text is encountered are examples of self-monitoring.

The processes of metacognition was also mentioned in Wade and Reynolds' (1989) article. The type of awareness were

i) task awareness - what to study in a particular learning situation

ii) strategy awareness - how best to learn it and

iii) performance awareness - whether and to what extent they have learned it.

2.5 Reading Skills, Reading Strategies and Reading Achievement

In recent years, there had been a great deal of research on metacognition, which had been defined as the awareness and regulation of one's own cognitive processes (Baker, & Brown, 1984; Flavell, 1979). Metacognitive activities were considered critical for effective learning and scholastic achievement (Borkowski, Carr, Rellinger, & Pressley, 1990; Paris, & Winograd, 1990).

The learning problems of many students who achieved poorly in school had been found to be related to their inferior metacognitive abilities (e.g. Billingsley, & Wildman, 1990; Chan 1991; Wong, 1993). Much recent research had been directed at developing among students greater awareness of and better control over their own thinking and learning processes. In other words, the aim was to enable students to adopt a strategic approach to learning; acquiring an
appropriate repertoire of cognitive strategies and being able to monitor and regulate use of these strategies to enhance learning.

Chan (1992) investigated the relationship of motivation, strategic learning and reading achievement among students from Grade 5, 7 and 9. The findings indicated that only Grade 9 students (14- and 15 year-old) differentiated among ability, effort and strategy attribution for both successes and failures. Students did not fully differentiated strategy use for effort or ability until their midteens.

Students in higher grades (7 and 9) who had high self-perceptions of cognitive competence were more likely to use strategies in their learning. Strategic learning was found to mediate between the effects of motivation (belief in personal control, learned helplessness, perceived competence) on reading achievement only for Grade 9, not for younger grades. The findings also supported the need to provide students with strategy instruction and to convince them that learning outcomes were attributable to the use of strategies.

Bartlett and Knoblock (1988) developed a study skills questionnaire so that college students could self-evaluate their study skills. Even students at the college level were not highly efficient in using study strategies. In order to be successful learners, students required updated study strategies to cope with the increased text related demands of college courses.
Study strategies involved reading "to perform identifiable cognitive and/or procedural tasks" (Anderson, & Armbruster, 1984). Simpson (1984) suggested three possible reasons that college students failed to use effective study strategies. First, students might have received insufficient instruction in strategies that were appropriate for college coursework. Second, students might be unable to monitor and revise their study strategies. Third, they might be familiar with appropriate study strategies, but still neglected to apply them. Whatever the reasons for their approaches to studying, students must be aware of their study strategies if they were to meet the demands of prescribed tasks (Baker, & Brown, 1984). Once strategies were brought to the metacognitive level, college students were more likely to monitor and revise them according to task demands.

Nolan (1991) looked at the effectiveness of combining two cognitive strategies, self-questioning and prediction among forty-two students in Grades 6, 7 and 8 whose reading comprehension ranged from 0.6 to 3.9 years below grade level. Results indicated that students who used self-questioning with prediction scored higher on a measure of reading comprehension than those who used only self-questioning or a more traditional vocabulary development intervention. This metacognition strategy benefited both these students whose reading comprehension was slightly below grade level and those whose comprehension was severely below grade level.
The study by Paris and Jacobs (1984) examined children's reading awareness and comprehension skills as examples of the developmental and instructional relations between children's metacognitions and performance. 8- and 10-year olds were interviewed about their knowledge of reading tasks and strategies in the fall and spring. A scale of reading awareness was constructed and related to children's performance on several reading tasks. During the year, half of each group received 4 months of classroom instruction on how, when and why to use reading strategies to enhance comprehension. Pre-test correlation revealed a significant relation between children's level of reading awareness and comprehension skills. Furthermore, comparison between pre-tests and post-tests revealed that the metacognitive instruction significantly increased children's reading awareness and their use of comprehension strategies. The study clearly showed that a) children who were more aware of the nature of reading tasks and strategies also scored higher on tests of reading comprehension and (b) informed instruction in the classroom could enhance both awareness and comprehension skills.

Canney and Winograd (1979) studied children's beliefs about reading by using an interview and an experimental manipulation. Children approximately 8, 10, 12 and 14 years old were presented with passages that were either intact or disrupted. When children were asked if each passage could be read and why, it was found that younger and poorer readers attended to the decoding aspects of reading whereas more proficient readers knew that making sense of the text was the good of reading.
Kobasigawa, Ransom and Holland (1980) reached similar conclusions when they asked 10 - 14 year-olds questions about skimming. Children at all age levels could describe skimming, but only the oldest children could use skimming as a strategy.

Forest and Waller (1979) found that older, better readers were able to verbalise more about their strategies knowledge and were better able to utilise that information while reading. Paris and Myers (1981) compared good and poor readers matched for age, sex and arithmetic achievement and observed that good readers knew more about reading strategies, detected errors more often while reading, and had better recall of text information.

Schraw (1996) investigated the impact of text-based importance and task-based importance when reading expository text. Text-based importance referred to information in a text that is important due to its structural relation to other text segments. Task-based importance referred to information that is important due to constraints beyond the text. In an initial test of the interactive compensatory strategy, Schraw, Wade, and Kardash (1993) found that segments that were high on the task-based dimension were recalled especially well regardless of text-based importance, whereas segments low on task-based importance were recalled better if they were high on the text-based dimension. They concluded that adult readers used text-based and task-based criteria in an interactive, compensatory fashion to allocate their resources during reading.
Haenggi and Perfetti (1992) examined the roles of basic reading processes and prior knowledge in reprocessing of expository text. The 48 college students who participated were divided into groups of above-average and average readers based on their performance. The subjects were asked to rewrite notes, reread notes or reread a text. They found that rewriting notes, rereading notes, and rereading the text were equally effective activities for improving reading comprehension performance. The evidence showed that repetitive reading to be an efficient reprocessing strategy.

In summary, students will only be able to use learning strategies more efficiently when they are older as compared to younger students. Mastering the usage of different learning strategies will enable students to be more successful learners.

2.6 Good and Poor Comprehenders: How Does Their Use of Reading Strategies Differ?

Kletzien (1991) investigated students' self-reports of strategies used when reading text of graduated levels of difficulty (independent, instructional, and frustration). Two groups of high school students served as subjects, good and poor comprehenders.

The strategy use of good and poor comprehenders was similar in several respects. Both groups indicated awareness of a wide variety of strategies, but activated only a few strategies when actually reading. Attention to vocabulary,
rereading, making inferences and using prior knowledge were the most frequently used strategies. For both groups, the greatest variety of strategy use was reported when reading passages were at an independent reading level.

There were some notable differences in the strategy use of good and poor comprehenders. The good comprehenders in this study were more flexible in their strategy use and were more likely to persist in activating a variety of strategies when text became more difficult.

Even though both good and poor comprehenders were aware of a full range of strategies, their working repertoire was somewhat limited. It may well be that students were taught what to do, and perhaps how to do it, but not when to do it. Kletzien recommended that “Strategies should be taught in the context of real reading situations, and students need to be given control over the strategies so that they can use them independently.”

Loranger (1994) examined the study strategies of successful and unsuccessful learners to determine if successful learners would differ in the quality of their information processing from unsuccessful learners. It was expected that good learners would use studying techniques requiring greater cognitive effort, such as note taking, summarising and outlining. Three high school students in Grade 11 were studied as successful students; three unsuccessful students were studied as well. Each of the six participants was interviewed individually for a
single, 1-hour session. During the session, students read and studied an article. A videotaped interview with the researcher followed reading and studying. The successful students were more active, purposeful, and flexible in their strategy use. Although the unsuccessful students were generally less efficient in their use of learning strategies, they were satisfied with their academic performance. That is, the unsuccessful students perceived themselves as successful learners, lacking self-knowledge of their inefficient strategy use.

Miller and Yochum (1991) examined students' perceptions of themselves as readers and the strategies they used to solve reading problems. When they interviewed the students about the types of reading difficulties they experienced, some students lacked awareness of any difficulty whereas others were aware of difficulties yet were unable to demonstrate appropriate strategies. Similarly, Pressley, Ghatala, Woloshyn, and Pirie (1990) found that students are often not aware of their reading competence. In two experiments conducted with university students, students were asked to rate their confidence to answers to short-answer and multiple-choice questions after reading challenging passages. The students had great confidence in their answers even when they were wrong. The authors concluded that "when adults read challenging, inconsiderate texts, they may often be unaware of gross comprehension problems."
Noorazida (1996) did a comparison between 'good' and 'poor' readers. Based on her research findings, she found that good readers viewed reading as a meaning-getting rather than a decoding process. Good readers were able to detect inconsistencies in a text and employ strategies to understand those inconsistencies. Good readers used more strategies (in terms of types, frequency and appropriateness) than poor readers.

Vacca and Vacca (1993) asserted that compared to poor learners, good learners used more strategies and process information more thoroughly. Good readers also knew when and where to apply the strategies and were able to assess their learning and modify their strategy used accordingly. The correlation between the number of strategies an individual had and successful learning was explained by Siegler (1991) who argued that the more strategies an individual had at hand, the more accurately he could 'shape' his approach to the demands of the situation. The fact that good learners use more strategies than poor learners is also supported by Pressley, Synder and Cariglia-Bull (1987) and Weinstein (1984) while Collins (1995) and Enwistle (1988) agreed that more thorough or deeper processing results in more learning. Like Vacca and Vacca, Palmer and Goetz (1988) contended that good learners know a lot about strategies while Collins (1995), Lorranger (1994) and Kurtz (1991) affirmed that comprehension monitoring and flexibility of strategy used are necessary for successful learning.
Block (1995) also found that (whose subjects who were ESL learners at a Malaysian university) good learners focused on making connections between the ideas in the text in contrast to the poor learners who focused on the details. Adamson (1990) whose subjects were ESL learners at an American University had a similar finding in that the good learners were concerned with understanding the main ideas while the poor learners were concerned with understanding every word.

It could be summarised that good students are more flexible in their strategy use and are more likely to persist in activating a variety of strategies as compared to poor students. Poor students, however, are unaware of their inefficient strategy used and thus perceived themselves as successful learners. Good learners also use more strategies than poor students and focus on making connections between ideas rather than details.

In conclusion, based on all the above studies, it appeared that there is a positive correlation between the reader’s self-perception and his reading ability. High achievers or good students tend to have high self-perception as compared to low achievers. Their high self-perception is based on their performance successes, feedback from teachers and parents on their ability and also their comparison with others.

Both the good and poor students do not show any significant difference in the aspect of learning strategies awareness. However, good students are able to
apply the different learning strategies more efficiently than poor students. They do not only know what strategies to use but when and how to apply the strategies as well. Studies have shown that the ability to apply the strategies at different learning tasks enables a person to be a more successful student.