SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

7.1 INTRODUCTION:

English is an international language, spoken in many countries both as a native and as a second or foreign language. It is a West Germanic language originating in England and the first language for most people in Australia, Canada, the Commonwealth Caribbean, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. It is taught in schools in almost every country on this earth. It is a vibrant and a living language spoken by over 300 million people as their native language and an additional 100 million people use it fluently as a foreign language. Millions speak it as an additional language also.

In India which has over 1000 million (over billion) people, English is the associate official language. Pakistan, Bangladesh, and many other nations which were ruled by Britain continue to use English both as an optional medium of instruction in their schools and as one of their official languages. The Islands of the Philippines continue to use English as an important language for education, administration, and for mass media purposes. English is the chief foreign language taught in the schools of Europe, South America, Asia and Africa.

According to Bloom (1956), oral ability is a necessity if a child is to learn in school. Ayodele (1987) opined that pupil’s inadequacy in the range and control of language is a dominating factor in educational failure. This deficiency in the students generates a vicious circle of difficulties which goes on increasing in magnitude as school life progresses.

Various factors varying from place to place and situation to situation do exist and create difficulties in a teaching learning situation. Unmanageable student numbers, poor classroom conditions, poor motivation, lack of teaching competence, lack of support from home and society, pressure from unwieldy syllabus in other subjects, too many languages to be studied at the same time, unhealthy attitude of the authorities in many cases---- all these factors lead to the decline in the standard of teaching English language teaching in schools. Besides,
there are certain teacher oriented factors that lead to poor English language learning. “Oral competence of teachers teaching English is poor, reading competence is found to be poor and writing competence seems to be somewhat poor”. (Franklin)

7.2 MEANING AND PURPOSE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION:

Secondary Education is a vital stage in the overall scheme of educational training and its importance can never be belittled although the emphasis upon its aims and purposes has varied from time to time. This is the stage where education is given to the age group 13 to 16 years.

Problems regarding the teaching method have been discussed from time to time by different Commissions and many have given some suggestions also. But in most Indian schools these suggestions are not implemented in a true manner. Therefore, it is necessary to know the recommendations of Education Commissions regarding secondary schools before giving suggestions to improve the method of teaching English.

7.3 NEED OF THE STUDY:

The new insights gained into the process of language acquisition in the recent past have made the prevailing practices in language teaching look outmoded and redundant if not pernicious. Meaning based interaction, which involves hypothesis-testing, exploration and experimentation, is not regarded as indispensable for acquiring a language. In the changed perspective, the learners is seen as playing an active part in learning how to make meaning with the help of words, unlike the passive recipient of knowledge about the target language, in the traditional language classroom. An active learner’s role has clear implications for a new approach to language teaching with a new role of the teacher.

7.4 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The basic problem undertaken for investigation in the present study is to examine the various methods of teaching English used by the Secondary School teachers and whether they have sound knowledge about the subject, so that they
can claim themselves to be competent. Hence, the study has been entitled as-
“A STUDY ON THE METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH FOR DEVELOPING
TEACHING COMPETENCE OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF
ASSAM”.

7.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1) To examine the academic and the professional qualifications of the
   English teachers at Secondary level.

2) To study the methods and skills used by the English teachers in classroom
   situation.

3) To examine the competencies required of a teacher teaching English and
   how the competencies identified varied with the demographic variables of
   teachers i.e. (age, sex and educational qualifications) and with the
   contextual variables (urban and rural) of teachers.

4) To study the methods of teaching English Method at the Teacher
   Education Institutes.

5) To examine the perception of Secondary School students in learning
   English.

6) To investigate into the performance of the students in English at the
   Secondary School level.

7.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS OF THE STUDY:

The following research questions as per the objectives (Objective
1-Objective-5) have been formulated for the study:

1) What are the academic and professional qualifications of English teachers
   teaching in the Secondary Schools?

2) Do the English teachers use appropriate methods and skills to teach
   English to the Secondary School students?

3) Whether the competencies of the Secondary School teachers vary-
a) Between male and female teachers?

b) Between urban and rural teachers?

c) Among teachers of different age levels (5 levels)?

d) Among teachers of different educational qualifications (4 levels)?

4) Do the teachers of the Teacher Education Institutes use the right method to teach the English Method to the student teachers?

5) How do the Secondary School students perceive the learning of English?

7.7 HYPOTHESIS FOR THE STUDY:

For Objective 6 the following hypothesis has been formulated:

H₀: There is no significant difference between the performance of the students in English in the Secondary schools in rural as well as in urban areas.

7.8. DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

a) The present study has been delimited to the Secondary (Assamese medium) School teachers teaching English in the Kamrup District of Assam.

b) The study considers teachers below the age group of 55 years.

c) The study is delimited to students studying in Class VIII, IX and X in Government/ Provincialised (Assamese medium) Secondary Schools of Kamrup District.

d) The study also considers teachers teaching English Method in the Teacher Education Institutes of Assam.

7.9 REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE:

Different scholars have produced scholarly works and have highlighted a variety of studies which are to some extent relevant to the present study. Thus, this study is an attempt to review those relevant information found both nationally and internationally in this particular field. The investigator has covered literature review mainly from 1960 to 2012.
7.10 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENT STUDY:

As language learning is different from the learning of other subjects like History and Physics, so also the teaching of a language is different from the teaching of other subjects. Thus, it is clear that the teachers of English require specialised training to cope with the demands of language teaching in schools. Keeping in mind the teaching competence of Secondary School teachers and how it can be developed, this study has been undertaken. This type of study could contribute a lot in enhancing the efficiency of the English teachers and would help to rectify their defects of teaching the English subject.

7.11 METHODOLOGY:

The present study has been carried on with the help of Evaluative Survey Method. The target is to evaluate the problem of the study and also to point out in which direction the object of the study can be improved. The method has also been used to collect detailed description of the existing phenomenon with the intent of employing data to justify the current conditions and practices or to make more intelligent plans for improving them.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH:

Qualitative research, a method of inquiry employed in social sciences, aims to gather an in-depth understanding of ‘why’ and ‘how’ of decision making not just ‘what’, when’ and ‘where’. Qualitative methods can be used to seek empirical support for the research hypotheses. Qualitative researchers typically rely on the following methods for gathering information: participant observation, non-participant observation, field notes, reflexive journals, structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and analysis of documents and materials.

QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH:

In social research Quantitative research refers to the systematic empirical investigation of social phenomenon via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques. The objective of quantitative research is to develop and to employ mathematical models, theories/ or hypotheses pertaining to phenomenon. This process of measurement is central to qualitative research because it provides the
fundamental connection between empirical observation and mathematical expression of quantitative relationships.

**MIXED METHOD:** Mixed method research is defined as the type of research in which the investigator collects and analyses the data, integrates the findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methods in a single study or the programme of enquiry. Thus qualitative and quantitative approaches are mixed within and across the stages of evaluation

**CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL TERMS USED IN THE STUDY:**

**TEACHING METHOD:**

In the process of learning and teaching, a method of teaching is very important. It is a tool in the hands of the teacher. A teacher with a good and a right method of teaching is liked by all the students. A good method of teaching results in good learning. A method tells the teacher how the matter should be taught. Selection of the right method ensures success of the teacher. It helps in the achievement of goals.

Some of the English language teaching methods are the Translation Method, Bilingual Method, Direct Method, Audio-lingual Method, Natural Method, Phonetic Method, Communication Language Teaching Method (CLT), total Physical Response Method and Immersion Programmes.

**TEACHING LANGUAGE SKILLS:**

There are, in general, four language skills, each based upon the modality of emphasis. These are the Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing skills (LSRW).

Listening and speaking skills are complimentary to each other and so they are known as the aural-oral skill. Reading and writing skills are complimentary to each other and they are the visual-manual skills. Again, speaking and writing skills are known as productive skills. They are also called active skills. Listening and reading skills are known as receptive skills. They are also known as productive skills.
COMPETENCE:

Competence is the degree of accomplishment of an objective with respect to quality and time. It is an aspect of the total personality of the individual. Competence based education is an approach to instruction that aims to teach each student the basic knowledge, skills, attitudes and values essential to competencies.

ACHIEVEMENT TEST:

Achievement tests have generally been categorized as single-subject tests, survey batteries or diagnostic tests and further dichotomized as group or individually administered tests. Typically, one administers achievement tests in order to obtain an indication of general academic skill competencies or a greater understanding of an individual’s performance in a particular area of academic performance.

TEACHING COMPETENCE:

The whole notion of the teacher as the disseminator of knowledge has undergone a tremendous change. While in the old scenario, the teacher was the only dispenser of knowledge, in the new scenario, the teacher becomes the facilitator. “The teacher is no longer the sage on the stage but the guide on the side”. A teacher can be called competent only if he has the competence in his teaching i.e. has teaching competence.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY:

With the setting of the objectives and the hypotheses for the study, the investigator adopted the following procedures for the selection of the sample of the study and the research tools for the collection of data.

VARIABLES CONSIDERED FOR THE STUDY:

Teacher related variables:

The teacher related variables are the methods of teaching English, the skills used by the teachers and the teaching competencies of teachers that varied with the demographic (age, sex and educational qualification) and contextual variables (rural and urban).
SELECTION OF SAMPLES:

Population:

The population of the present study consists of all the teachers teaching English in the selected Secondary (Assamese medium) Schools (Government/ Provincialised) of Kamrup district. In Kamrup District, the total number of Arts teacher is 5056, out of which 3590 are male teachers and 1547 are female teachers. There are 320 High Schools and 49 Higher Secondary Schools in Kamrup District. The population also consist of students studying in Class VIII, IX and X in the rural and urban Secondary Schools and all the teachers teaching English in the Secondary Schools. The population also consisted of all the teachers teaching English Method in the Teacher Education Institutes of Assam.

Sample of the Study:

The sample of the study comprised of the following:

1) 10 students of Class VIII, 10 students of Class IX and 10 students of Class X of 10 Rural Secondary (Assamese medium)schools and 10 Urban Secondary (Assamese medium) Schools.

2) 54 teachers teaching English in 20 Secondary (Assamese medium) Schools (both rural and urban).

3) 8 teachers teaching English Method in four Government and four Non-government Teacher Education Institutes.

CONSTRUCTION OF TOOLS FOR THE STUDY:

The investigator has made use of the following tools to gather the data for this study. They are as follows:

a) Observation schedule and questionnaire for teachers teaching English in Class VIII, IX and X.

b) Interview schedule for the teachers teaching English Method in the Teacher Education Institutes.

c) Interview schedule for the students of Class VIII, IX and X.

d) Achievement test for students of Class VIII, IX and X.
QUESTIONNAIRE:

The teachers of Secondary schools of Kamrup district were given a questionnaire consisting of open-ended and closed-ended questions.

INTERVIEW:

The investigator has employed the semi-structured interview schedule for the Secondary school students as well as the teachers teaching the English Method in the Teachers Education Institutes.

OBSERVATION:

Observation involves recording the behavioural patterns of the people, objects and events in a systematic manner.

In participant observation, the investigator becomes or is part of the group that is being investigated. In the present study, the investigator was in an explicit role. The investigator was present everyday over a period of time in the English classes conducted by the English teacher of the selected school.

ACHIEVEMENT TEST FOR THE STUDENTS:

In the study, an achievement test constructed with the help of experts in the particular field on English language skills. The expert consisted of retired and resource persons of English of High Schools and Higher Secondary Schools. The test was conducted for Class-VIII, Class-IX and Class-X students to find out the level of competence of the students in listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Reliability of the test:

In this research work, Spearman Brown’s, Split-half method has been administered to find out the reliability of the achievement test conducted for the students of Class VIII, IX and X.

With the help of Spearman Brown’s formula of Split-half method it is observed as follows:

The scores accredited to the students of Class VIII gives $r_{tt} = 0.57$

The scores accredited to the students of Class IX gives $r_{tt} = 0.53$
The scores accredited to the students of Class X gives $r_{tt} = 0.51$

Hence, the scores accredited to Class VIII students are 57% reliable, the scores accredited to Class IX students are 53% reliable and that of Class X are 51% reliable.

7.12 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA:

Data analysis involves analytical thinking. This is done only after collecting all the relevant data and which is always focused on the research problems and the hypotheses and questions arising in the statement of the problem. Here the investigator has compiled and summarized the results in a logical order in relation to the objectives and hypothesis of the study. The data has been analysed with the help of percentage and presented more clearly with the help of tables and supported by bar diagram.

7.13 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:

Objective 1:

Findings on the academic and professional qualifications of the Secondary School Teachers:

- Among the 28 teachers in the selected 10 rural secondary schools of Kamrup District, only 5 teachers have a B.Ed. degree. The remaining 23 teachers are without a professional degree.
- Out of 26 teachers selected from the urban Secondary schools, 9 teachers were Graduates, 11 teachers were Graduates with B.Ed. degree while 3 teachers had a Post Graduate degree are without a professional degree and only 3 teachers have a Post Graduate degree with B.Ed.

Objective 2:

Findings on the methods and skills used by the teachers in classroom situation:

- It was observed that all the teachers use the mother tongue in the class because it was a common language which the teachers and the students knew and it aids to the comprehension easily.
- In Class VIII, 75% of teachers in urban and 69% teachers in rural schools used the Translation Method in the class followed by only 17% in urban
and 11% in rural school teachers using Bilingual method of teaching English. In class IX, 83% of teachers in urban and 89% in rural school teachers used Translation method followed by 27% of urban and 16% of rural teachers use Bilingual method of teaching English. In Class X, 69% of urban teachers and 79% of teachers in rural schools used Translation method of teaching English while 33% of urban and 21% of rural teachers use Bilingual method of teaching English in school.

- Majority of the teachers felt that there is no necessity of using audio-visual aids while teaching English in Secondary School.
- Teachers rarely or sometimes gave home assignments.

**Findings based on Triangulation:**

**Convergent Findings:**

- The teachers used the Translation Method in the class.
- The teachers used the mother tongue in the class because it was a common language which the pupils and teachers know.
- Only 15% of the rural teachers and 30% of the urban teachers planned their lessons.
- Majority of the teachers felt that audio-visual aids are not required to teach English.
- Teaching Learning Material (TLM) is not provided by the school. Teachers are not seen using TLM in an English class.
- While teaching listening skills, the teachers are found to be active speakers. The students were passive listeners. The students scored less in the listening skill in the achievement test.
- While teaching speaking skills, the students wanted more opportunities to speak in the class. The teacher was the only speaker in the class. Students scored less in the speaking skill also.
- While teaching reading skills, the students wanted more opportunities to read. The teachers used to do the reading in the class. The students have scored less in the reading skill also.
- While teaching writing skills, it was observed that though the teachers helped the students to write summaries and paragraphs, the students were
less interested to write. But the students have scored more in the writing skill than in the listening, speaking, reading skills in the Achievement Test.

Divergent findings:

- The activities conducted by the English teachers were debates and extempore speeches. The debates and extempore speeches were held in the mother tongue of the students.
- The teachers gave feedback to the students by marking or through a generalized talk. Giving feedback was not observed in the class.
- Teachers were found to use the school library for books. However, the students did not have an access to the library.
- The students were evaluated through Half Yearly and Annual Examinations. Less number of weekly/monthly tests is conducted by the teachers. No classroom activity was undertaken in an English class.

Objective 3:

Findings on the competencies i.e. Competency based on Knowledge and Competency based on Profession required of a teacher teaching English in the Secondary Schools and how the competencies varied with the demographic variables (age, sex and educational qualifications) with the contextual variables (urban and rural) of teachers:

- All the teachers’ pronunciation and fluency in English need to improve.
- All the teachers need to improve when it comes to explaining the theme of the chapter before starting the chapter.
- Teachers of age group 30-35 years need to improve their coming well prepared to the class while teachers of age group of 35-55 years are satisfactory for coming well prepared to the class.
- The Graduate teachers are poor, Graduates with B. Ed need to improve while Post Graduate teachers are satisfactory in grammar and usage.
- Majority of the teachers are poor in the use of blackboard/coloured chalk.
- No teacher is seen to check homework, arrange the sitting arrangement, motivate the students or evaluate the students well.
No teacher is seen to use teaching learning material in the class.
The teachers give more stress on the writing skill than on the listening, speaking and reading skills.
No teacher planned lessons beforehand.

Objective 4:
Findings on the methods of teaching English Method at the Teacher Education Institutes (TEI):
- The teachers teaching English Method in the teacher Education Institutes use both Bilingual and the Translation Method of teaching English to the student teachers.
- Both the Government and Non- government TEI spend less classroom hours in pair/ group work and in story telling activities.
- Evaluation of the student teachers is mostly based on theory and practical methods of teaching and not on the English teaching methods and skills.
- Charts are only used. No A-V aids are used in the TEI.

Objective 5:
Findings on the perception of the students in learning English:
- When we observe the home background of the students, it is found that the percentages of the family members who can neither read nor write English is more in rural areas than in urban areas. This also shows that the students depended more on the teachers than on their family members.
- Most of the students of Class VIII, IX and X of both the rural and the urban schools want their English teachers to use new and interesting methods of teaching English which reveal that the teachers use the same Translation Method to teach English.
- Majority of the students are not satisfied with the teaching method of the English teachers as they never resorted to group work, role playing, dramatization or watching a film or listening to radio other than reading or narrating stories from the text book. No activity is taken up for teaching English.
- Students wished for more opportunities to use English in the class.
- Students had no access to the school library.
Objective 6:
Findings on the performance of the students in English at the Secondary School level:

- The urban Secondary School students fared better than the rural students. But boys are found to be more variable in quality and girls are found to be more consistent.
- The analysis shows that there is significant difference between the performance of rural and the urban students and so the null hypothesis has been rejected.
- The students were not found to be proficient in the Listening, Speaking and Reading skills excepting the Writing skill where it was given more stress in school.

7.14 IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

- In order to be a good English teacher, one must not only teach, but inspire and empower. The goal of teaching is to excite the students about learning, speaking, reading, writing and comprehending the language. The teachers should not be rigid in the use of methods and approaches. Using a combination of various methods in the classroom is the best way for the teacher to teach English as a second language.
- The teachers of English should be given training for the improvement of their own English. Some refresher course and in-service training programme can be organized from time to time. For requiting new teachers, only teachers having good proficiency in English together with a B. Ed degree should be selected.
- The teacher should keep in mind the principle of variety. He can try to bring in variety in a number of ways so that no student finds the learning process a drudgery or boring.
- Evaluation of the students can be done continuously. Evaluation certainly should aim at improving the abilities in the acquisition of the four skills.
7.15 CONCLUSION:

A change is called for in the present approach to English language teaching because in the prevailing practice even after seven to eight years of formal English teaching, the students as a whole find it extremely difficult to actually use the language in normal communication, whether in the spoken or written mode. Thus, the language teacher needs the right attitude to language learning and teaching, rather than a formal method. There is a need for greater attention to be given to the training of English teachers, both through pre-service and in-service training programmes.