Chapter I

English, the *Lingua Franca* of the Globe

1.0 Introduction

One of the important and immediate effects of globalisation is the increase of demand for English. The statement that English has become the global language has many ramifications. English, by being accepted as global language has gone beyond the boundaries of six nations that use it as their mother tongue and has become the language of necessity for the entire globe. Thus, it is the language of communication for the world.

English is the world’s way of communicating internationally and inter-culturally, just as ‘the Christian calendar is the world’s way of tracing time, just as the Arabic numbers are the world’s way of counting, and first as the metric system is, for the most part, the world’s way of measuring’ (Huntingdon, 1996: 6). The English language is no longer a language of national or cultural or class identity; it has become a language of technology, of communicational necessity.1
Amazing developments in the field of Information and Communication Technology, globalization of education, ever increasing demands for communicative competence in all the realms of life have necessitated the learning of the global language, English, today. The wide world has become a global village with this information explosion, and for various reasons, English has come to be accepted as the main medium of communication. Good communication is the vital means of information exchange which has become imperative in this global village. Today, English language is accepted by many nations as the language for communication because of the various advantages that the language offers. In the recent times, an individual’s capability is assessed in terms of the communication skill in English which is treated on par with the subject expertise of that particular profession. This aspect throws light on the fact that an individual is expected to meet the challenges confronting the career aspects through a demonstration of strong English language skills. In this competitive world, there is every possibility that the modern man can get vulnerable to failures, disappointments and loss of wonderful opportunities due to a lack of communication skills. Particularly, the job scenario in this globalised world involves many dimensions of assessment in the form of competitive examinations and personal interviews; and, English serves as the medium of communication in these encounters. Hence, the aspirants of progress in life in this technological era have to gear up with expected English language
skills that cater to the various needs of their employment and advancement.

The importance of English, with the global status it achieved, is witnessed in almost every field due to the recent information explosion. The language has not left any field untouched, bringing about tremendous changes in the social, cultural and educational contexts of the globe with sudden rush in lives of people of almost all nations towards mastering the skills of this global language. Further, the research and development in all arenas is interwoven with new technologies for which English language serves as the medium, thus necessitating an inevitable need to be well versed in the English language skills. In addition, the need for English grew large with the advent of the Internet, that “epitomizes the information society”\(^2\) and has facilitated easy access to world happenings, migration of people along cross-cultural boundaries and rapid transfer of information among one another, through the medium of English.

The first step towards accepting English as language of communication lies in the fact that the need for communication has attained gigantic dimension as it never had been in the past. Each nation has its own language and interaction of various nations becomes difficult without a common *lingua franca*. Maintaining amicable terms on the basis of communication necessitates a common
language for the nations of the world. C L Wren in his book *The English To-Day* has aptly stated the purpose of a common *lingua franca* as follows:

An international language, as commonly conceived, is not in any sense a substitute for existing tongues, but simply to be used as a secondary language for the rapidly growing needs of understanding and intercourse between persons of different nationality.³

Ambassadors and other similar types of officials are another category that deserves a special mention as they negotiate terms on an international basis. Often one finds such officials visiting foreign countries for the pursuit of information or various diplomatic deals. When there is no common *lingua franca*, communicating gets difficult for them. A common language norm would help to solve the problems of world nations not only for communication but also for better understanding in all the negotiations.

However, the selection of a common *lingua franca* is ridden with obstacles. When a language has to serve as *lingua franca* of a nation the political factors come to play in order to take a decision regarding the language that has to be considered for that status. Since ancient times till the world wars, a number of languages right from the
classical languages such as Greek and Latin, French, Arabic etc., served as lingua franca depending on the superior political power of the nation to which the language belonged. After the Second World War the perceptions of the nations underwent sweeping changes due to the political, economic, scientific and technological reasons.

In the changed circumstances no nation could survive without keeping in pace with the happenings of the world. In addition, the world nations ventured at establishing forums such as League of Nations and United Nations for peaceful coexistence and cooperation in dealing with vital issues. Further, other continents also started such organizations to meet the local issues. Some of them are SAARC, NATO, European Union etc.. Such massive organizations cannot function smoothly without a common lingua franca.

David Crystal quotes some occasions at which a common lingua franca, the English language, can ease the constraints and facilitate smooth access to information and knowledge.

A conversation over the internet between academic physicists in Sweden, Italy and India at present is practicable only if a common language is available. A situation where a Japanese company director arranges to meet German and Saudi Arabian contacts in Singapore hotel to plan a multinational
deal would be impossible, if each plunged into a three way translation support system, but it would be far more complicated than the alternative, which is for each to make use of the same language. 

In the context of communication at work place, another important aspect that deserves mention is the strong social bonds that form there. Privatisation and globalisation have increased the working hours immensely; as a result, the corporate persons spend longer hours at work place than at home. In addition, it is the team work that makes the office achieve the expected results. Hence close and long interactions have become imperative in the global language. The situation demands one-to-one association which results in developing firm relationship with one another, when the colleagues at the work front start appearing to be more intimate than the biological relatives. The working places of the modern times thus are considered more than just places of employment; they are firm grounds for socializing, forming bonds, etc.; and the common language has necessarily become English, which is the official language for work.

Hence, one important endeavour of any success-aspiring worker is to explore the art of communication through good articulation. The individual’s interest thus culminates in an urge to imbibe excellent English language skills for communications that are pervading the
lives of individuals of this computer generation. Hence, more and more individuals are found searching for avenues to master the skills of the language. Even the system of modern education is emphasizing the vital role that English language plays in the technology era. So, the educational institutions are working in the direction of making it mandatory to impart strong English language skills to their students.

The traditional learners pursued elementary education through the medium of their mother tongue as the educators of those times opined that in the initial years a learner comprehends knowledge at a comfortable pace when taught through the mother tongue. The type of life people lead in the past fifty years hardly had any dire necessity of foreign or second language learning. But the political and social changes influenced people’s life; and, simultaneously their divergent needs promoted the cause of updating their skills. From the time of Industrial Revolution, the English speaking countries played a vital role in promoting the scientific and technological inventions. All of them, particularly the latest one, the internet, has made it mandatory to create one language formula for the world. English, the international language from 1918 has become global language in this context.

As more and more countries began attributing special status to English, the demand to cultivate the skills of the language too has
increased proportionately. The educational curriculum, of almost all the nations, is faced with the challenge of not only updating their syllabuses in respective faculties, but also in choosing the common language to deliver them. Many nations decided upon teaching English either as second language or as foreign language to enable their youth to learn the modern subjects. In addition to this, the outlook of the parents towards their wards’ education too underwent drastic changes. Many parents are focusing on English medium education considering it as more beneficial for their wards from the primary or the elementary level itself. They opine that learning the skills of the language from tender ages help build confidence and establish a strong career.

To meet this challenging situation, where language skills have to be imparted to a vast number of learners, the traditional classrooms might cater to the diverse needs of ever-increasing number of learners. The implementation of technology in the field of education simplified the procedures of teaching to such massive strengths by providing alternative opportunities to the learners. With the help of these technologies, self-taught techniques have been developed. The benefits that the technologies offer are witnessed in the enthusiasm that the learners are showing to pursue the language skills with ease.
1.1 Technology in Teaching of English

The following statement aptly shows the important role that the technology is playing in altering the methods in every field from a human-assisted environment to electronic machine-based ambience:

Whatever the question of the moment in the ELT staffroom, one thing remains certain: the English Language continues to evolve in cyberspace, changing from something we might be familiar with to something that is clearly a new electronic form.5

The recent advances in multimedia technology offer Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) as an alternative to the traditional mode of the lecture method followed in the teaching/learning of English. Though the idea of replacing or substituting a teacher with a machine apparently appears absurd, there are many advantages of CALL. The CALL environment offers the learners, irrespective of their diversified needs, an opportunity to interact with the computer on one-to-one basis. This is advantageous to an average or a weak student; he feels attended to. The second important advantage is that it allows learner autonomy. The learners enjoy a certain amount of freedom as the teacher’s role is confined to that of a facilitator. The onus of exposing the learner to both the major and ancillary skills (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing and Grammar and
Vocabulary) remains with the teacher as they are essential for an individual to be considered as skilled and competent in the target language. A normal classroom curriculum might fail to offer an integrated syllabus dealing with all the skills; but CALL methodology has immense potential to operate in such complex situations by integrating all the language skills into one complete whole.

At a much deeper level, the technological impact is encompassing all fields of study with its computerization. The existing circumstances focus at the undeniable fact that the English language widely used in computer applications can as well be taught with the help of technology since a modern day learner is techno savvy and can effortlessly avail the benefits that accrue with CALL learning in order to be a skilled communicator in English language. Learning through CALL has certain advantages over the huge classroom, controlled by the teacher. One can enumerate the benefits as follows:

1. It provides one-to-one communication between the course material and the learner which allows him to have his own space and time and accommodates his pace of learning, slow or fast. (This solves the problem of the pace of the learner.)

2. With the machinery and software of the computer technology, the learner can always revert back for any reference or clarification. (This solves the problem of raising doubts often
in the class and solves the problem of the weak students who are hesitant even to ask genuine doubts.)

3. In a country like India where the classes are widely heterogeneous, owing to various factors, the breeding of inferiority and superiority complexes can be totally avoided. (This solves the problem of increase in the already established inhibition.)

4. It is easier to revise the material to make it suitable to the needs of the learner than to train the teacher to suit to the fast changing needs of the English language. (This solves the problem of frequent printing after every revision and saves considerable time and energy on the part of the material producers and also the teachers.)

5. Many and diverse exercises are available to the teacher to test the learners more frequently. As the questions are given after every unit, generating questions will not be a problem for the teacher. Even evaluation can be done quickly with the help of the computer. (This is of great advantage to the teacher. Much time can be saved by the teacher which is otherwise spent in preparing questions and correcting the answers of the students.)
6. CALL also helps the students who go for higher education where National and International entrance or qualifying tests are conducted through CBTs.

Even the employment sector is showing promising signs of hope to the modern generation. The pivotal aspect, that computer literacy and English literacy are interwoven, renders the learners and teachers of English who have good command over the two, with a high demand and good opportunities. The current trend in the language sector in the recent years too shows that the English Language Teaching (ELT) has been identified as the most potential industry of major growth around the world. More and more students are found enthusiastic to learn English, since their doors of success open quickly if they showed their talent in communicating well in the language; and, the teachers of English are viewed as the persons who can operate the key to their success in the technology oriented employment market.

In addition, the Internet, with its vast resourcefulness, harnessed the growth of English language further, as communication has become faster and affordable due to the access to electronic mail. Thus, the English language has established a formidable position as the dominant language in the arena of media and communications. The statistical analysis by David Crystal indicates that around three-quarters of the world’s mail is carried in English. Around 80% of the
electronically stored information is currently in English. English continues to be the chief *lingua franca* of the internet. He further cites a typical observation made by a Polish commentator, Pavel Radkovsky, whose essay “English, the *Lingua Franca* of the Internet” was available on the web in 1966.

The expansion of the internet strengthens the leading status of English. I can claim that many of those who have started learning or improving their English do so because they want to understand better what appeared on the computer screens after they had transferred packets of expansion data from other computers. In other words, the more the network spreads, the more people are encouraged to learn English and the stronger the position of English becomes.\(^6\)

Thus, the English language skill is a necessity in this era of the internet. This information revolution has made people realize that proficiency in English language opens the doors of opportunity in any field to any corner of the world. In the coming years, there are going to be remarkable facilities and innovation in communication systems, which are going to revolutionize the methodologies of teaching and learning English. Currently a number of websites are already offering English Language Teaching courses and English Language Teaching
material. The next few years are going to be the years of “virtual schools.” With computers occupying such vital position in the language teaching arena, the type of CALL material used for teaching and learning gains prominence in the field of language instruction.

This research aims at studying the CALL material from the aspect of its suitability to the English Language Teaching situation in the Indian context. The study begins with examining the status of English in India and the changing needs and priorities.

1.2 English: The Global Language

David Crystal traces the reason for the increasing popularity and use of English:

English is destined to be in the next and succeeding centuries more generally the language of the world than Latin was in the past or French in the present age. The reason of this is obvious, because the increasing population in America and their universal connection and correspondence with all nations will, aided by the influence of England in the world, whether great and small, force their language into general use, in spite of all the
obstacles that may be thrown in their way, if any such there should be.7

Today, English is the essential medium of communication as the information technology revolution is dominating the world. The revolution has equated the language to a “global commodity” which is in high demand like petrol or the microchip. However, the language underwent twists and tumults before it settled itself as a global language. David Crystal remarks that English received this global status due to the special role the language plays in every country in the world. At present English is recognized either as an official language or as a semi-official language by most of the countries and it is imparted to a majority of the learners as a second language or a foreign language.

Crystal further supports his statement by providing statistical evidence that English is an official language in around 70 countries of the world. In over 100 countries the language is taught as a foreign language in schools. In the US, Canada, Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and in some Caribbean islands English is the mother tongue. Due to the “three pronged proliferation” of the language, the three dimensions of it being official, semi-official and foreign language, a majority of population in the world use English for inter and intra national communication. David Crystal approximates
the strength of English speakers among the world population to be nearly one-fourth.

The purposes for which English is used might be many. The special benefits the language is endowed with, for being considered as the global language, are as follows:

1. The international affairs with their vast membership require mutual understanding pertaining to many activities which are jointly conducted by all member nations. In such work atmosphere of international collaboration, a common language has the potential to make effective communication. English is second or foreign language in majority of the countries; hence, English language has come to be accepted as the medium to convene their meetings.

2. A number of scientific organizations make official use of English to carry on their research. Research in science and technology involves frequent discussions and conferences to proceed in the right direction and go ahead towards development. Hence, English language helps the scientists of various nations to pursue their activities.

3. At present, the sports competitions are held on both national and international bases. The participant members of the competitions might be from any country or from any corner of
the globe. When programmes are ventured at such massive level, a common language should fulfill the communication needs of the participant nations. Thus, a number of international sports organizations are using English as the language for their proceedings.

4. Almost every international organization uses English as its official language. The trend indicates that all the international bodies virtually consider English to be their “chief auxiliary language.” Beyond the international bodies, in various other arenas too, English wields its power; for example, the mass media, communication and advertising industries thrive on English, which has actually been the medium of the press for centuries. Right from their origin till the modern day, the newspapers have been playing a significant role in providing news services to the masses at a nominal cost, and their language has chiefly been English. David Crystal takes the data compiled by the Britannica Encyclopedia during the 1994 that about a third of the world’s newspapers were published from those countries where the English language has special status.

The estimates of the influence of individual newspapers on a world scale. In one such table, reported in the Book of Lists (1977), the top five papers were all in English: top was The New York
"Times, followed by The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal and the two British papers The Times and The Sunday Times. Of particular importance are those English language newspapers intended for a global readership, such as the International Herald Tribune, US Weekly and International Guardian."

5. The other types of publications indicate the same escalation in circulation; and, for a majority of them English is the chief medium. A quarter of the world’s periodicals are published from English speaking countries. The list includes almost all kinds of publications – literary reviews, hobby journals, comics, technical reviews, scholarly journals and much more. As far as statistics regarding individual genres are concerned, a visit to any university library shows that most of the academic journals with an international readership are published in English.

6. Advertising is another sector which has received strong impetus from the industrialized English speaking nations, particularly after the invention of printing technology. In the more industrialized nations such as the US and UK, the business propaganda underwent an upsurge by the end of the nineteenth century with advertizing as the lone mode of publicity for the development of business.
7. The industrialization with its mass production has created a competitive atmosphere among industries to sell their products. This promotion is proportional to the growth in the purchasing power of the consumers. The technique of advertising about their products in the newspapers was also in the offing. While the newspapers were mostly in English language the business advertisements too were in English. Hence the usage of English language in the arena of advertising was automatic. As the global marketing broke the boundaries of countries and transformed itself into international business, the advertising at international level gathered momentum. Innovation in advertising paved way to transforming English as appealing and as catchy as possible. The companies employed English experts who can juggle with words in producing exciting and attractive advertisements with brevity. The status of the language was elevated to the global level by the US, the economic super power; and, the advertising too thrived in the same land, as an industry.

8. The Broadcasting industry is a sister concern of mass media. Right from its inception till the spread of its network all over the world, the main language that was used in the industry was English. Since English was the first language used in
transmission as the network spread the language too sprouted roots in various countries.

9. The entertainment industry also got highly innovative with the changing attitudes of the people all over the world. Motion pictures originated as the chief mode of entertainment for masses, which culminated in the establishment of the cinema industry. With this, English made an upsurge even in entertainment sector with the English movies occupying the front place.

10. The music industry also is a major contributor of English language growth. Among the youngsters of the past few decades, the popularity of the pop music reached herculean heights; the lyrics and beats of those English songs became so popular that even people who do not follow English language enjoy that music. The interest in English songs cultivated a modern culture and a spirit of unity among the youth with certain popular numbers. In the words of David Crystal,

the social, political and spiritual messages carried by the words (such as 'We Shall Overcome') resounded at gatherings in many countries, providing many people with a first – and often highly charged – experience of the unifying power of English in action.$^9$
11. The travel industry is one of the modern businesses that the world has witnessed. The last few decades observed tremendous growth in this sector with more and more people travelling to various parts of the world for different reasons. Some concrete causes that deserve special mention for the rapid growth of the industry are academic pursuits and search for greener pastures with respect to career, political and business deals. The comfortable living styles of people with good pay and interest in exploring new places also is a vital aspect that promoted this industry.

12. The tourism industry offers attractive packages to travelers and also employment to youth. With the rise in the pursuits of people to explore various corners of the world geographically, the world appears to have been minimized into a global village. Travelling worldwide demands communication on a larger scale. The individuals initially have to gear up with necessary language skills in order to communicate in places beyond one’s native land. Since English is the most popular among the world languages, exhibiting necessary skills of the language minimises hardships in communication. Thus, with mobility of people the language too became cross cultural.
The promotion of English beyond social, cultural and geographical boundaries was also made by the field of education which played a major role in transforming English into a global language. Almost all the major scientific expeditions took place in English speaking countries. The research and developments in the field of science and technology are preserved through the print and electronic mode in English language. Many countries of the world have chosen English as their second or foreign language to inculcate the spirit of research, and update oneself of the happenings in the field of science and technology. Harry Mashabela, a South-African writer, thinks that English plays the double role of unifying the globe on one hand and spreading the ideas on the other:

Learning and using English will not only give us the much-needed unifying chord but will also land us into the exciting world of ideas; it will enable us to keep company with kings in the world of ideas and also make it possible for us to share the experiences of our own brothers in the world.\textsuperscript{10}

The colonial period had ended by 1960’s in many countries of the world; still, the language remained behind with them as a unifying common language of communication. The emphasis on English increased in the field of education with reputed national universities of some of these countries offering courses through the medium of
English to their students of different linguistic backgrounds and foreign students. Thus, English became compulsory at institutions of higher learning with national and international statures. A prophetic statement given as a response in a questionnaire on the status of English reads as follows: “The global market for English language teaching and learning will increase over the next 25 years.”¹¹ A few other answers given to the questions posed in the questionnaire that deserve mention are:

“English will retain its role as the dominant language in world media and communications. 94 percent agreed or strongly agreed.”

“English is essential for progress as it will provide the main means of access to high-tech communication and information over the next twenty-five years. 96 percent agreed or strongly agreed.”

“English will remain the world’s language for international communication for the next twenty-five years. 96 percent agreed or strongly agreed.”¹²

Such evidences emphasise that the importance of the language in the global scenario is an undeniable fact. The communication systems which are vital to the modern generations too indicate that English is the most popular language with communication systems. Be it telephone or postal industry, or the electronic mail, all these fields indicate that major mail and talks are done in English. The lingua franca of the internet is English. Michael Specter provides evidence to
this fact through an article entitled “World Wide Web: 3 English Words.” The lines read as follows:

To study molecular genetics, all you need is to get into the Harvard University Library, or the “medical library at Sweden's Karolinska Institute, is a phone line and computer. And it turns out, a solid command of the English language. Because whether you are a French intellectual pursuing the cutting edge of international film theory, a Japanese Paleo-botanist curious about a newly discovered set of primordial fossils, or an American teen-ager concerned about Magic Johnson’s jump shot, the Internet and World Wide Web really only work as great unifiers if you speak English.13

Thus, by the first half of the twentieth century English established its ground firmly in almost all vital fields and in almost all nations of the world. English became the leading language of the world affairs be it political, scientific or educational.

Today, English is estimated to be the mother-tongue of 250 million people in the world. It enjoys a first and second language status in major countries of the world which number to around 100 million. The wide prevalence of the language leaves no scope to identify it with
any single nation. David Crystal\textsuperscript{14} attributes two major factors that caused the growth of English as a world language. They are:

1. Expansion of British Colonial power.
2. Rising of America as economically super power.

Crystal asserts the position of English by mentioning the socio-cultural developments of the past 200 years which direct towards the success of the language. He mentions that the English language has repeatedly found itself, “in the Right place, at the Right time.”\textsuperscript{15}

The global status attained by English did not happen in a decade or even a century; it went a long way historically, politically, militarily and culturally before finding its strength among the languages and nations of the globe. A brief account of how it happened may be of academic interest.

1.3. **English Language: A Historical Perspective**

The success of English can be attributed to the success of the English speaking countries that dominated the world from the middle ages, particularly, the Renaissance. The English were a powerful race which invaded various countries around the world and wielded its power over them. The English language gradually spread to other countries due to colonization of the Great Britain. Those nations under the empire rule harnessed the transformation of the language of their
rulers into an international medium of communication by cultivating the language skills expected of their rulers either for political or for economic reasons. Some of these countries were multilingual and multiracial. The English language, being the tongue of the rulers, exhibited authority in absorbing all kinds of vocabulary into its fold adding to the convenience of the speakers to imbibe it easily. The language provided considerable freedom for other language words to be included into it. These multilingual nations of the world under the British rule had to adopt English even for their internal unity.

Since the language found course in many countries during the empire rule, it spread fast as most of the nations were under the colonial rule for a number of centuries. The British used English as the medium to spread, all over the world, the latest developments in science, technology and various vital issues of significant value. The industrial revolution in Britain too played a significant role in promoting the status of the language. The language expanded its vocabulary in a rapid manner by the addition of scientific terms to the language in tens and thousands.

The Asian and African continents with their multiracial and multilingual cultures found English language as an easy recourse to their unsettled language problems and for communication on the national and international levels. Added to this, the growing
domination of American economy attracted many people to choose their educational and career opportunities in that continent.

Thus, every major development of the history has revolutionized man’s life tremendously, and created the present scenario of the world. Those developments influenced man’s life positively and elevated his status in the society. The first among such steps towards development is the invention of writing 6000 years ago; the second is the publication of the first written book in the year 1300 BC; the third was triggered with the invention of the printing press in 1455 AD. Every revolution thus enhanced the status of man to a more learned being and improved his quality of living. The computerization is the fourth of such revolution which is sweeping the mankind at present with its strong impetus. While all these inventions helped man to promote his own language, it is the Internet that caused a whirlpool change in his attitude towards language. It demanded a common language for global communication; and, with its historical strength English has filled that place.

The computerization which spread rapidly all over the world originated in the US, where English is the mother tongue. The language which this technology uses in its applications is English since the inventors of the hardware and the software are natives of the US. Today, being brought together with the computer technology, people of various
cultures and nationalities around the world meet, interact, trade and socialize with the global language, English.

These changes and developments in communication left no country uninfluenced. Today one finds every nation in the world has accessibility to the Telephone, the Radio, the Television and Air Transport. The modern communication systems like fax, E-mail and Internet added to this list in the recent years with their wide availability. The trend indicates that there is going to be a massive progress in the communication systems with a number of nations researching into the subject over the benefits these systems could offer. During the next few decades, one can visualize promising changes in the communication arena.

1.4 The Origins of English in India

The India’s first contact with the British can be traced back to the year 1600; with the advent of East India Company, a group of English merchants were granted trading monopoly with India by the then queen, Elizabeth. By the year 1765 the company grew in its strength with the gradual decline in power of the Indian rulers. After the fall of the great Mughal Empire in early 18th century on the death of its last powerful ruler Aurangzeb in 1707, the English wielded their force and strength to consolidate their rule in India. From 1765 the British Raj established itself in India till the time of Indian independence in 1947.
During the British rule English became the medium of administration and education throughout the subcontinent. The Macaulay's *Minute* of 1835 clearly indicates the policy of the British to introduce English medium education in the country. The words are as follows:

> It is impossible for us with our limited means to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the western nomenclature and render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of population.\(^{16}\)

The British rule made possible for the people of the nation to have direct access to English language as the entire administration was carried on in English and the British started English medium schools to prepare helpers for their administration. The British initially considered the cause of vernacular languages in the country but gradually made English as the medium of communication and administration for their convenience. At that juncture, the colonial
ruler’s focus was on teaching English to select people in order to get assistance from them in governance. English was the language of administration, a compulsory subject at the school and college and the medium of instruction for subjects at school, college and university. To climb the social ladder an individual had to possess the proficiency of English language.

Up to the Second World War English teaching in India continued without much emphasis on the functional aspect. It means, the same method of teaching had been followed in India from the 1830’s to independence. After independence English still occupied a significant place in the education system and in the social life of the people. Two hundred years of English rule and English education made the spread of the language faster. Right from the period when the British set their feet in the country till the modern day the English language has been admired by a number of people in the country. People always showed enthusiasm to learn the language of the colonial masters. Nehru brought out the intertwining of English and education in India and emphasised its importance for Indians if they wanted to play any role on the global scenario:

One hundred and fifty years of intimate contact has made English an integral part of our educational system, and this cannot be changed without injury to the cause of education in India. In addition,
English has today become one of the major languages of the world and Indians can neglect its study only at the risk of loss to themselves.\textsuperscript{17}

After the country became politically free, there arose a question over the status of English in the country. The nation was engulfed in controversies over the single language policy since independence. The Central Government’s proposal over making Hindi as the official language of the country was protested against by the south Indian States. Hence, English was considered as a semi-official language as the best alternative to Hindi. The removal of English after 15 years was not acceptable to them. Hence there was an agitation to continue English.

In such circumstances, the leaders had to retain English as the link language in the country. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru then declared the continuance of English for an indefinite period and assigned it the status of an Associate Official Language:

For an indefinite period -- I do not know how long --
I should have English as an associate, additional language which can be used, not because of facilities and all that, but because I do not wish the people of the non-Hindi areas to feel that certain doors of advance are closed to them because they
are forced to correspond -- the government, I mean -- in the Hindi language. They can correspond in English. So, I could have it as an alternative language as long as people require it and the decision for that -- I would leave not to Hindi-knowing people, but to non-Hindi knowing people.18

The decision on the status of English as a semi-official language of the country thus received support from the leaders as the framers of the constitution provided laws where freedom was given to decide upon the medium of instruction in which the educational institutions have to operate. The leaders of the sub continent with many languages and their dialects always remained apprehensive that without a common national language every State would promote the cause of their regional language, thus marring the development and growth of the nation. As a result in the year 1963 the Parliament passed a bill declaring English as the Associate Official Language of the country for an indefinite period.

The independent India formed a number of committees which debated on the language that has to be introduced in the arena of education. One of the important commissions is the Kothari Commission which suggested the 10+2+3 pattern of education for the country. The Commission, though did not raise the issue of language, it discussed
the problem of language in the country. The Commission did not show favour towards learning any one language; but recommended the development of regional languages; and, recommended English as the medium of instruction for all the national level institutions. The Report further stated that English must continue to function as the library language and as a medium of communication at the international level.

The educated Indians in the country understood that mastering English would open the doors of development and progress. More number of people wanted opportunities in the outside world to be open for them whatever the reason is: economic stability, social advancement or career development. Moreover, the learning of the language would serve as the “window to the world” by making them learn about the research and developments that are taking place in the world outside. Scientific and technological advancements of the countries would be possible only by keeping track of the developments going on and in pacing the activities to suit the direction of the world.

The recent statistics confirm the demand for the language in the subcontinent with the expansion of the technology and India’s desire to steal the show as an advanced nation; it established the country’s position as 3rd in the world, only after the US and the UK, in terms of the number of speakers of the English language. Gradually there
emerged several varieties of English throughout the sub continent and have been collectively referred to as, “South Asian English.”

The national policy on education adopted by the Government of India in 1968 stressed the importance of the study of English:

Special emphasis needs to be laid to the study of English and other international languages. World knowledge is growing at a tremendous pace, especially in science and technology. India must not only keep up this growth, but also make her own significant contribution to it. For this purpose, study of English deserves to be specially strengthened.¹⁹

The significance of the language in the country can be understood in terms of the facilities the language offers by cultivating the skills. English is an international language and is widely spoken in the world, next only to Chinese. In the international forums such as UNO the language occupies the position as one of the six official languages. It is the lingua franca of the globe and anyone who can converse in English can effortlessly establish international rapport. In the words of FG French the popularity of the language can be understood in terms of the international privilege it has gained. He states:
Anyone who can read English can keep in touch with the whole world without leaving his own home.\textsuperscript{20}

English helps the people to access all the scientific, technological, political, commercial, cultural and other developments occurring in the world. The Radhakrishnan Commission on University Education observed that any nation that does not cultivate the skills of the language would lag behind in terms of the developments going around the world. The Commission opined that ignorance of English amounts to negligence on a person’s or nation’s progress:

\begin{quote}
English is the only means of preventing our isolation from the world and we will act unwisely if we allow ourselves to be folded in the envelopes of the dark curtains of ignorance in the world.\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

The Kothari Commission reiterated the importance of the language by laying stress on its significance as a language of reference; English language serves as an important language for higher education because all valuable research pertaining to science and technology was carried by English speaking countries and published as books. The Commission emphasized the resourcefulness of the library language. Further, it should be taught from school level itself by giving thorough training to students in mastering the reading skills of the
language to comprehend the valuable information available on the subject under study. Any student can avail this store house of knowledge only by mastering the skills of the language.

The globalisation makes people use English as a link language. Without English proficiency, it becomes difficult to correspond with any other nation in the world. For a country like India, communication within the country also becomes cumbersome due to the multi linguistic setting of the States.

1.5 The English Language Situation in India: Problems and Solutions

English is offered a place of prestige in the country with a hope that the future generations would get better job prospects by mastering the language. The acquisition of a certain level of proficiency in English has become a necessity due to the associate official status attributed to it. All national and international affairs of the nation are carried on only in English. The facilities offered by the language are aplenty.

The National Policy on Education (1986) has reiterated the policy of NPE (1968) with respect to the study of languages. The policies mentioned contain the implementation of the three language formula with facilities for the study of English and other foreign languages. To attain these goals syllabus, text books and scheme of the
examinations have been worked out by the policy makers and experts. A critical examination of language policies adopted at various levels would help understand the existing scenario.

The NCERT is one of the organizations that deserves mention with respect to syllabus design, assessment of teaching situation at school level and prescription of the curriculum according to the changing circumstances. The syllabus is designed in compliance with the goals prescribed in the constitution. The constitution set it goals as the establishment of social justice and development of scientific temper among the individuals in order to keep abreast of latest knowledge. The teaching objectives were designed to achieve the prescribed goals.

Beyond these policies and targets there exists the reality that the second language learners do not get ample opportunity to imbibe the skills of the language in a functional and communicative way through the society and environment. Since the priorities have been changing fast, the field has undergone rapid changes. The significant aspects of language teaching in the changed scenario are as follows:

- English language should be a compulsory second language in the school curriculum.
- Innovation should mark all spheres of language teaching.
- Spoken English should be emphasized.
- Grammar has to be equalled to a tool among learning items.
• Structural aspects should be given less importance by focusing functionality of the language.
• Phonetics must be laid stress on, only to improve the pronunciation and not for theoretical knowledge.
• The English should be less flowery, linguistically simple and idiomatic in expression and facilitate interaction.

The Organizations like NCERT\textsuperscript{22} have done the needed surveys and researched into the field and during the year 1988 concluded that the focus on English teaching needs a radical revamping. Their recommendations are as follows:

1. The Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing (LSRW) skills of the language should be chosen as the items through which language objectives could be met with.
2. The course materials should be outlined on the basis of graded competencies, i.e., from elementary to higher education.
3. The detailed syllabus should aim at inculcating the LSRW skills so as to make every individual understand, speak, read and write English.
4. The syllabus should be broadly divided into linguistic aspect containing the grammar items, and thematic content, containing the communicative aspects.
5. The development of skills should be based upon focusing on the functional aspects of the linguistic items and not merely on the grammar structures.

6. The syllabus should encompass the learning needs of cognitive, behavioural and the affective aspects of an individual.

7. The teaching strategies should maintain the communicative principles of language teaching. Some principles as envisaged on the communicative basis of learning are as follows:

   - Classroom instruction should be learner centered.
   - Testing and teaching should be on aural-oral basis.
   - Interest should be developed among learners on literature.
   - Focus should be on current trends.
   - Sound system must be made familiar.

8. A classroom teacher has to be competent enough to meet the requirements of the learners. The skills of language must be well studied before preparing teaching lessons for the learners.

J B Carroll makes an observation on language learning stating that the “degree of contact” is essential before assessing how much a learner learnt the second language. Excluding this aspect, the other vital point is the status of the second language in the school curriculum. The variables for the introduction of second language could be as given under:
• The age or grade at which the second language is introduced.
• Whether the second language is made the language of instruction and if so, what grade or level it becomes the medium of instruction.
• Whether the second language has to become a medium of communication among children because of the heterogeneity of the children’s language background.
• The skill of the teacher in the second language and in teaching it.

English education in India started very early; still, a scientific way of teaching the language has not been adopted. The pedagogy of English began with the contributions of two English scholars, John Miller and Thomas Prendergast who focused on teaching English based on pedagogical principles to the Indian students.\textsuperscript{23} John Miller’s book entitled \textit{The Tutor or a New English and Bengalee work, well adapted to teach the native English}, contained some elements of teaching, beginning with English alphabet to teaching pronunciation where he used phonetic sets rather than the orthographic ones. The vocabulary consisted of a list of words with contrasting sounds followed by drawing a parallel with the Bengali equivalents of the sounds. The grammar items were in the form of dialogues constructed around Bengalee themes such as boat-hiring, wages, transportation of rice by bullocks etc. Thomas Prendergast (1806-1886) was the second expert
who threw light on the psychology of language learning. He published *Mastery System* (1856 or so) with the conclusions drawn upon the observations of the children’s foreign language acquisition attempts. He was the first one to observe that “the amazing feature of language was the unique capacity of human beings to generate an infinite number of sentences from a finite set of means.” This observation set the ball rolling in the field of research on the teaching of English as a foreign language.

After independence the priorities changed with the increase in the number of students in schools and colleges and the demand for English has always been rising. The constitution makers too have ascertained the compulsory teaching of English to establish common welfare. As far as this policy of continuing English as a compulsory subject goes, it has done tremendous good to the youth of independent India. But the sad fact with reference to the English language teaching/learning is that the actual teaching has failed to fulfill the objectives of teaching English in India. While the changed scenario demanded English as a language, the Macaulean system always offered English literature. The resistance to change the materials, methodology and evaluation pattern of the General English courses according to the changed scenario poses a huge problem to the learners of English in India.
Fifty years of teaching/learning English has made one fact clear: the students of the first stream (English medium) learn English not because of their prescribed English course but because of the exposure; the students of the second stream who study English only as a subject fail to acquire the proficiency. The reason for this drawback is that English is not treated as a language, but is treated on par with the other content oriented subjects. Though the number of English classes for them is staggeringly huge by the time they complete their tertiary education, this failure continues; and, in addition, it breeds some new inhibitions. So, the Indian education system has created a gap between the two groups of students – those who are proficient in English and the others, ignorant of it. Since all the examinations assess the performance of the students in terms of their written examination many students fail to pass in the examination as they do not pick up any language skills from the classroom teaching. This is the result of a number of factors that are inherent in the system.

The first among the problems that confronts the modern language teaching situation has its seeds in the history of English teaching/learning in India. From its introduction to the pre-independence time English was taught in schools by the native speakers who were imported from England. Every pupil had the right kind of exposure and had the opportunity to listen and speak in the
target language with the mother tongue speaker of English. So from 1835s to 1947 no problem cropped up in English language teaching/learning.

During those years, though the course materials consisted of pieces from English literature, there was no problem of any sort as it was taught by the British teacher. Speaking in English was taken care of as the teacher knew no other language. But after the independence also, India continued the same materials and methodology which are not conducive to teach a second language. The problem of shifting the medium of instruction to the regional languages in early 1960s too added to the gravity of the problem. In the absence of the right materials and methodology the students have been left helplessly failing to obtain the language skills.

The second problem is concerned with the large and heterogeneous classes. As language teaching involves attention towards every individual, the present day teacher finds it difficult in the class to impart instruction satisfactorily as the class is over-crowded. Since teaching of a language is skill-oriented and involves adequate practice on the part of the learner, the English teacher faces the difficulty of not being able to give this practice in such packed classrooms.
The third problem concerns the success and failure in the examinations in the absence of clearly defined objectives and in the presence of content-based evaluation pattern. Most of the English courses do not specify the objectives of teaching that course clearly. Moreover certain unhelpful objectives such as completion of the syllabus and preparing the students to face the examination cause a disastrous effect on the language teaching situation.

The next problem is related to the cultural alienation that the present English materials impose on the non-English medium and rural students. It may be wise to make the content local and familiar when the language is foreign and dissimilar to the local language. The syllabus too that is prescribed for language classes does not meet the requirements of cultivating the desirable skills. Most of the lessons cause a cultural shock to the learner as they belong to foreign writers and themes. Such items cannot be taught unless the teacher is competent enough to teach the language and unless such ambience is familiar to the students. Particularly with inadequate editorial help, it becomes difficult even for the teacher to feel any affinity with the course material.

Though all these problems appear gigantic, there is still a solution.

1. All the general English courses right from class one to the tertiary level should concentrate on imparting English language skills and not the content as is done at present.
2. The objectives should be defined clearly; the selected/prepared materials must be suitable to the teaching of English as a language.

3. The methodology should be on the lines of teaching English as a language.

4. Most importantly the evaluation pattern must be on the lines of language testing; the international testing systems of English, such as, SAT, IELTS and TOEFL serve as good models. These systems are evolved after a long research and experimentation; and they are ideal models for language testing. The evaluation pattern also should be in coordination with the ELT teaching methodology, and test only the imparted language skills and not the content.

5. The introduction of English to non-English medium students starts very late; and in fact they need intensive teaching of English because the exposure is comparatively less.

6. The English syllabuses of school level from LKG to Tenth class (for non-English medium students) are neither focused nor graded. There is overlapping of language items, due to the absence of coordination among the material producers of the books for different classes.
7. As the evaluation pattern is not focused or targeted at language learning, the teaching is highly content based and also done through vernacular medium for the non-English medium students. So, the exit behavior of the school leaving children does not assure even the basic proficiency in the language skills. Even at intermediate or +2 level the materials are neither graded nor useful.

The teachers and the learners who are directly involved in the ELT situation are left in desperation because of the following reasons:

1. The resistance, of the boards of studies of English and the departments of English at the university level which decide upon the materials, methodology and evaluation of English, to adopt a completely suitable ELT context.

2. The actual practitioners such as teachers are not involved in the decision making.

The reasons given by the Universities and Boards for the failure of English learning are as follows:

a) Literature based lessons are imperative for humanistic and value-based education and a language has to impart them.

b) ELT is dry and uninteresting.

c) It is difficult to train all the practicing teachers and prospective teachers to adopt the ELT methodology.
The demands of the context are otherwise. Proficiency in English language is not an ornament as in the olden days; it has to be accepted that the education system of a country has the responsibility to train its clients in the needed skills to suit the changed scenario and send them out of the institutes fully equipped with the required skills. But the Indian universities do not seem to have realized the responsibility yet. What is needed is a revamping of all the general English courses in the country and a highly graded and comprehensive syllabus from class one to the tertiary level. A graduate exiting from the university shall be able to earn and retain a job that he aspires for.

At present, where the literacy rate is increasing, it may be difficult to educate each and everybody to acquire the needed proficiency in English. All the English lecturers possess a post graduate degree exclusively in literature and do not get any training in language teaching before becoming lecturers. So, the contradiction between the qualifications and the demands of the job creates confusion. Hence one of the following measures has to be taken: either MA in ELT has to be introduced in all the universities; or, alternatively, a training program in the ELT methodology should be made imperative for the post graduates in English if they desire to teach English language skills. This shift occurred due to change in the trend from the form to the function of English. Language teaching is viewed in terms of the
socio-cultural settings because its function lies in its usage in the real life.

Most of the above problems can be solved by adopting teaching of English using CALL materials. The available technology could be made use of, to expedite the English language learning process in the country. CALL is a well developed concept and widely spread throughout Europe and the West. It is time that India develops its own materials for online teaching and testing in English. The scope of this dissertation, however, is confined to the critical examination and analysis of the CALL materials used in the Engineering and Technology colleges in Andhra Pradesh. As one of the goals of modern education in India is to achieve a uniform standard for the takers of similar courses of different, a course design which is done meticulously for the engineering and technology students of Andhra Pradesh could well be adopted by the students of other states also.

The following chapter would deal in detail with methodologies of teaching English and the origins of CALL as a tool of language learning.
CHAPTER I

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