ABSTRACT
ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to throw light on the need based methods developed by the researcher to enhance the English Communicative skills of technical students. The study also focusses on the advent of English in India and its global status. In the early 1980s, the term "Paradigm Shift" was used as a means of thinking about changes in educational methodology. The present study discusses various approaches and theories which have been in practice for the teaching of English as the second language. The use of technology, an integral part of today's life to enrich communicative skills in an interesting way, is dealt with in detail. The changing role of the language teachers in the technology driven world is also stressed.

Education in India has become synonymous with proficiency in English Language because of its influence in almost all the fields of education and the corridors of industry. The increasing demand for English makes it imperative for the teachers of English Language in India to prove themselves to be worthy of making all students attain a high degree of proficiency in this language. The teachers are expected to keep the students abreast of the latest innovations in the teaching methodologies and equip them with strategies necessary for making English Language Teaching more functional and
meaningful. For this, the teachers must be aware of the role of English in employment opportunities.

Despite years of study of English language from school days, students have inadequate communication skills. The syllabi and curricula followed in the early stages of education do not focus on the aspects of listening and speaking skills. As a consequence, students who join professional courses lack comprehending ability to understand even the classroom lectures and respond to them properly. The most important aspect of any language is to facilitate communication.

The demand of the day is that the teaching of English has to be focussed on enhancing the communicating power of the learners in the present context of booming economy and shining global market. The fact remains that incompetence in spoken English has marred the personality of many of our engineers, technocrats and technologists who are otherwise technologically sound. The researcher, in this study, discusses the theory and objectives of teaching English and the role of the teacher and learner in the teaching—learning process. The various approaches and methods of teaching English in vogue in India are also analysed. The researcher attempts to project a new method – the need based
methods in English language teaching – to enrich the communicative skills of engineering students. The concluding part of this study tells the fact that speaking and listening skills will *make* a technologist really distinguishable, confirming the validity of Aristotle's words "the ability to speak is a shortcut to distinction".

The thesis is divided into seven chapters, inclusive of an Introduction and Summing Up. The researcher has selected the Under Graduate Engineering students as the subjects of analysis. The students of two consecutive years (2005-2006, 2006-2007) belonging to various branches of study at Sri Krishna College of Engineering and Technology, Coimbatore, are chosen as samples. The students are divided into two categories. One from non English Medium and the other from rural background, with English as their medium of instruction. The students are divided into twelve batches, six batches for each category for an academic year. Each batch comprises twenty students. The need based methods developed by the researcher are administered and their progress in communicative skills is recorded.

Chapter I, "Introduction" states the objective of this research. The chapter traces the importance of the often neglected skills like speaking and listening in the early phase of education. The
researcher has taken technical education in particular for the study. The present status and importance of engineering courses are discussed. The necessity for designing need based methods to suit the requirement of the learners is stressed. The paradigm shift of English from academic pleasure to academic purpose for effective communication to cater to the demands of employment market is emphasized.

In Chapter II, “Emergence of English in India”, Macaulay’s recommendations with respect to teaching of English and their passive acceptance are highlighted. The chapter also examines the goals and priorities in education and more specifically in English education in post colonial India. The chapter deals with the recommendations and reports of The Radhakrishnan Committee, The Secondary Education Commission, The Kothari Commission, National Policy of Education, The establishment of CIEFL, The Study Group Report, The Acharaya Rammamurti Commission and The Report of the Curriculum Development Centre. The results and the impact of these recommendations are analysed.

Chapter III, “The Global Status and Position of English and Technical Education in India”, deals with the status of English language in technical education in India and its importance as a
global language. The increasing professionalism and operational mobility have brought in significant changes in the learners’ expectation from language learning to language acquisition. The acquisition of a high degree of proficiency in communicative skills in English has become a major requirement for becoming successful in one’s profession.

Chapter IV, “Teaching of English in India” analyses various methods and approaches for teaching English. The aim, objective, procedure, design, learner role and teacher role are studied and their effectiveness in improving the communicative skills of the learners is examined. Emphasis is given to the changed role of teacher wherein the teacher is expected to make effort to bridge the gap between teaching theories and technological aids or tools. This makes the basis for the next chapter.

Chapter V, “Technology-Enhanced Language Learning” explores the resourcefulness and impact of technology inside and outside the language classes. With the aid of technology, speaking and listening skills can be developed to a large extent. The chapter discusses the role of technological tools, language laboratories and internet in language teaching and learning. It also stresses the changing role of the teacher from interpreter to facilitator.
The next chapter presents the new method developed by the researcher. The outcomes of this method are tabulated. The classroom deficiencies for the development of spoken ability are dealt with. The teacher's role, learner's role and expectation, materials used and the design of the method are discussed. Procedure and factors that are to be considered while designing the need based methods are outlined.

In the last chapter, "Summing Up" the researcher consolidates the findings. Any one method will not be effective for teaching language skills. Prescribed curricula, syllabi and textbooks in technical education do not adequately enhance or fine tune the spoken skills of the budding engineers effectively. The teacher must design the curriculum according to the need, area of specialization, area of focus of the learner and then implement it. In future self learning instructional materials have to be developed by English teachers and not the software vendors. While developing such materials the deficiencies of the learners must be taken into consideration because acquiring communicative skills in English is definitely not a month's process but requires persistent efforts for further improvement.