CHAPTER I

Introduction
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION
STATUS OF ENGLISH IN INDIA – THE PRESENT SCENARIO

The English language has often enjoyed in India a higher status than other Indian languages. For higher knowledge and research in science and technology, a reasonably high proficiency in English is essential. English has also served as a catalytic agent and the vehicle of modernization in the country. Its use has acquired, besides, a status symbol in all parts of India.

English is the official language of administration and it is used in courts too. It is the language of international trade and industry. As a social language English has been used for interpersonal communication and serves as a window to the modern world. As a library language, it disseminates knowledge.

India is a multilingual country. Though Hindi is the dominant national language, English continues to be the link language. English is the language that is spoken and understood all over the country. The communication between the Union Government and the state governments is mostly carried out in English. The increasing awareness of the importance of English compels us to learn it not only for special or specific purposes but also for expanding our intellectual horizon.
At the international level, English language has shrunk the world into a global village. Salman Rushdie, the renowned novelist, points out that the English language ceased to be the sole possession of the English people sometime ago, because 337 million use English as the first language (L₁) and another 350 million as the second language (L₂). No other language has spread around the world so extensively and that too in a very short span of time. English has become a necessary tool for mobility, social and economic development in the present day world. As Marine Halborrow (1999, p: 26) says, “The language of capitalism at the turn of the twenty first century is English”.

English is, undoubtedly, a blessing, which Indians received as a result of the British colonial rule. Indians have an edge over others, particularly in the age of Information Technology revolution where the gates of the global job market have been thrown open to them. In an age where computers and the internet have taken over communication, work and entertainment, Indians with their knowledge of English are sought after all over the world because English is predominantly the language of the internet. “The English language is goddess Saraswathi’s gift to India”, remarked the late C. Rajagopalachari, the last Governor – General of India.

English had much deeper roots in South Asia than the British Raj had. The Raj crumbled and became a part of history; but the English language has been South Asianized and has become a part of the culture of that vast area. As the British were deepening their roots in the colonies, the English language was also
taking root; and eventually a large number of L₂ speakers developed, though their competence in English varied considerably.

The introduction of bilingualism in English on the Indian subcontinent and Sri Lanka has three distinct phases. The first phase comprises the efforts of the missionaries who came to South Asia essentially for proselytizing purposes. The second includes the efforts of a small group of Lankans and progressive people of the West who desired to use the English language as a vehicle for scientific and material progress. The third was a political phase which firmly established the English language in South Asia.

English is not really an alien language to us. It is the language of our intellectual make-up but not our emotional make-up. We are instinctively bilingual. (Raja Rao 1938, p: 18)

In recent publications on language problems and language planning in India, the reaction toward English shows five distinct attitudes demonstrated by five groups. The motivation for these attitudes or the change of attitudes is not always determined by educational or administrative factors; instead the socio-political pressure groups play a very distinct role. Thus, present attitudes towards English are determined on the one hand by language loyalty and on the other hand by pragmatic considerations: these two are not always in conflict.
The English education was introduced due to various factors. Enlightened people like Raja Rammohan Roy emphasised from the very beginning that the English could be successfully fought with the help of their own language. Accordingly many stalwarts like him advocated English education as it would benefit Indians in more ways than one. The English language was to be the main instrument for the dissemination of new knowledge and English culture, which was expected to bring about an emancipation of the tradition-bound Indian mind.

Although regional languages are now used as the medium of instruction in the states, English language continues to occupy an unassailable place in the Indian education. Commenting on its contribution in the field of education, The Education Commission (1966,p : 192) reiterated the importance of English at the tertiary level:

English will continue to enjoy a high status so long as it remains the principal medium of education at the university stage, and the language of administration at the centre and in many of the states. Even after the regional languages become media in higher education in the universities, a working knowledge of English will be a valuable asset for all students and a reasonable proficiency in the language will be necessary for those who proceed to the university.
English has also greatly contributed to the growth of knowledge in India, particularly in the field of science and technology. It has brought home to us the different developments in the international scene and helped us in properly understanding the world situations.

With the attainment of independence, the role of English in our educational institutions as well as in our national life came to be seriously questioned. It became apparent that English could not continue to occupy the privileged position it had been occupying under the British rule. There was a lot of controversy over the status of English in the changed context and the dust raised by that controversy has not settled down yet. It is unfortunate that many of our leaders equated English with an instrument of colonial exploitation and saw it as a shameful badge of our slavery. Worked up by this conviction, and in some cases guided by the political motive of gaining cheap popularity with the masses, they raised a great hue and cry to banish English lock, stock and barrel from the Indian soil. However, wise counsel prevailed and the continued use of English for the following purposes seems to have been recognized by all.

a. as a national link language
b. as an international link language
c. as a library language.
The Constitution of India, adopted in 1950 had envisaged Hindi as the only official language of the Union of India and English was to continue for 15 years from the date of adoption of the constitution. This was vehemently opposed by the southern states. As a result, parliament enacted in 1963 the Official Language Act 1963, providing for continued use of English for an indefinite period. Prime Minister Nehru also assured the southern states that English would continue to be the associate official language until such times as the non-Hindi states agree to accept Hindi as the only official language of the country.

Besides being the associate official language for inter-state communication and communication between the states and the centre, English is the only language which is understood by the educated people all over the country. Without English both official and private communication between many parts of the country will be completely cut off. In this connection, the clear and emphatic opinion of Jawaharlal Nehru is worth quoting.

If you push out English, does Hindi fully take its place? I hope it will, I am sure it will. But I wish to avoid the one unifying factor being pushed out without another unifying factor fully taking its place. In that event there will be a gap, a hiatus. The creation of any such gap or hiatus must be avoided at all costs. It is very vital to do so in the interest of the unity of the country. It is this that leads me to the conclusion that English is likely to have an important place in the foreseeable future.
The Indian Education Commission (1964-66) has also recommended the continuance of English in the interest of national integration and for higher academic work. It is therefore apparent that English must continue as the national link language for quite some time to come.

The following comments of Mrs. Jane Croom-Johnson, wife of a former representative of the British Council in India, and the remarks of Prime Minister Morarji Desai quoted by her, neatly sum up the situation:

Perhaps the French might have ruled India and the unifying language of India might have been French, but in the event it was English which became the means of communication not only of India with the outside world, but of Indians from different parts of India. A friend of ours from Kerala met, courted and married his Bengali Wife in English, as neither spoke the other’s language and many an Indian speaks our language better than we do. We were once at a British production of a Shakespeare play when we heard two young Indians commenting with disgust that a whole speech had been omitted. We hadn’t even noticed!

In India it is not only a popular second language but also the mother-tongue of a small Indian community, the Anglo-Indians. According to the 1971 census, nearly two hundred thousand Indians use English as their mother-tongue. Besides, quite a few Indian states and union territories viz., Nagaland, Meghalaya,
Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim have adopted English as the official language. Mr. M.C. Chagla, when he was the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, once ruled that English was an Indian language, and the Supreme Court upheld this judgement. The Sahithya Academy of India recognizes English as one of the Indian languages, and Jawaharlal Nehru even wanted to include it in the eighth schedule of the constitution, giving it statutory recognition as an Indian language.

Nagarajan (1978,p:161-171), while talking about English in India states:

The English language in India shares at least two characteristics of its existence with the cow in India. Both the cow and the English language are held in reverence and worshipped, though for different reasons and with different expectations of reward. Cow worship is believed to bring us infinite riches in the distant future. English is expected to bring the wealth of this world to the user here and now. The cow is in a state of perpetual decline in India since people do not look after it properly. The English language in India has been likewise steadily declining for a long while but we are resolved to let it neither die nor flourish.
TEACHING OF ENGLISH – PAST AND PRESENT

The ‘market value’ for English has made English teaching and English education a mega-industry in India. Macaulay’s Minutes on Education (1835) laid the foundation for English education in India. It became the ‘blueprint’ for education in India, and the ‘goals’ were clearly stated.

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 taste, in opinions, 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 to render them by degrees as fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population!

In India English is the widely taught second language at practically all levels of education. All the Indian universities and colleges have separate departments for the teaching of English. But unfortunately in these departments a majority of the students get little exposure to English as a living language.

Nearly after a century of English education only something like 3 percent of the population knows English, it seems obvious that English cannot be the language in which the millions of India will be educated. In 1900, the urban population of India received English as the language of the future, a
knowledge of which was essential for their advancement. Today, though English is still the only language that serves as a lingua franca, and a knowledge of it is still necessary for participation in national and international affairs, it seems certain that the future in India does not lie with English. What will actually happen in the future it is difficult to say, but it seems clear that for many years to come it will be in India’s interest to retain English at least as an important second language and thus keep open her only door to the knowledge and culture of the larger world. (Mathai 1951: p: 101)

For almost two centuries now, English has been playing an important role in our educational system as well as in our national life. It is generally held that the British introduced English in our educational system, in order to produce what Macaulay called; ‘a class of people, Indian in opinions, in moral and in intellect!’

But those who can take a dispassionate view of the issue agree that in reality Macaulay might not have been the villain of the piece he is usually made out to be. It is quite slikely that he strongly supported the Anglicists because he could see the benefits that would accrue from the learning of English. Even ardent patriots like Raja Ram Mohan Roy were in the vanguard of the Anglicist movement for “dissemination of useful knowledge of science and literature through the medium of the English language.” And indeed, though the British system of education had the intended result of turning out vast armies of
pen-pushers, as it is still doing, the learning of English which this system had emphasized, proved beneficial in more than one way.

In the first place, it helped the growth of nationalism which ultimately freed the country from the British yoke. Our national leaders drew their inspiration from the writings of the great thinkers like Ruskin, Carlyle, Abraham Lincoln and others who wrote in English.

English also served as a great unifying force in our struggle for independence. It is through this language that the leaders from the four corners of our vast country could communicate among themselves and chalk out their common plan of action. Even now, English is playing this important role as the national link language for the purpose of inter-state correspondence and as the language of trade and commerce between different parts of the country.

While recognizing the importance of learning English, it has to be admitted that it is not occupying the same place in the school curriculum as it did in the past, nor can the teaching of English be continued with the same objectives, under the changed conditions. For almost 200 years English dominated the school curriculum. It was the medium of instruction not only at the university level but also at the school level until the early thirties of the 20th century. Even when it ceased to be the medium of instruction, maximum number of periods were devoted to it and the students' main preoccupation was the impossible task of
acquiring a mastery of the kind of English written by the great English writers of the past. Needless to say, this was a highly frustrating situation and except in the case of a very few brilliant students, the standards of achievement of the majority of students, in English was extremely poor. This led to still worse consequences. The disproportionate emphasis on acquiring the 'silken terms and taffeta phrases' of English, resulted in the neglect of the other subjects which brought down the overall standard of education in the country.

It is now realized that this state of affairs cannot continue and that the teaching of English should be made more practical and language oriented in order to achieve the limited objectives of learning this important foreign language. The Official Language Commission appointed by the Government of India clearly indicates the position of English in our educational system.

Since we need knowledge of English for different purposes, the content and character of that language as well as the method of imparting it have to undergo a change. English has to be taught hereafter, principally as 'language of comprehension' rather than as literary language so as to develop in the students learning it as faculty for comprehending writing in the English language, more especially those relating to the subject matter of this specialized fields of studies. No doubt, to a limited extent, capacity for expression would also accrue and may also be usefully cultivated along with the faculty for comprehension; however, the change in the character and knowledge of English appropriate to our requirements
hereafter, as distinguished from the past, is clear enough. The requirements of knowledge for comprehending English is mainly a matter for understanding the basic grammar and structure of language and thereafter, principally, a question of widening the vocabulary in the desired direction. A perception of the literary beauties of Shelley’s lyrics and of Shakespeare’s poetic imagery is not strictly related to the requirements of the case. There will be full-fledged faculties available in our universities for the specialized study of the English language and literature in the same way in which there would be such faculties for other important languages and literature. The special requirement must not, however, determine the general position in the educational system.

The three language formula, first suggested by the National Integration Commission (1962) and later recommended by the Indian Education Commission (1964-66), envisages compulsory study of English either as a second language (L₂) or as a third language (L₃) for a duration of six years or three years respectively in non-Hindi speaking areas. The regional language or the first language (L₁) is to be taught from Class I to Class X and the second and third languages are to be introduced in Class V and VIII respectively. In non-Hindi speaking areas, the third language should be a modern Indian language other than Hindi. The mother tongue or the regional language should be the medium of instruction at all levels of education.
Following the recommendation of the commission and subsequently the National Policy on Education (1968), the states have switched over to the regional language as media of instruction at all levels. Making an official Statement of Policy (1967), the then Union Minister for Education has said, “The Government of India has accepted in principle that Indian languages should now be adopted as media of education at all stages and in all subjects including agriculture, engineering, law, medicine and technology’. This is an admirable policy so far as it goes, but many academics and leaders in public life feel that any sudden banishment of English from higher education, without sufficient and careful preparation, would not only bring down the standards of university education but would also cripple the intellectual life of the country as a whole. They, therefore, suggest that the universities, under the guidance of the University Grants Commission (UGC), should adopt a phased programme of switch over suited to each university, so that the standards do not suffer on account of non-availability of books in the regional language.

Though many Universities have switched over to the regional language, they have retained English as a compulsory subject of study up to the graduate level. Such a decision immensely benefited the students going in for higher education and to the students who would sooner take up a non-specialized job than go in for higher studies.
This takes us to the question of English Language Teaching scenario in India. In fact, the Study Group on the Teaching of English in India (1967) gives a vivid account of the standard of English teaching and learning in the country. It has identified three major components of English teaching which account for falling standards and calls for remedial action. These components are ‘men, materials and methodology’. The men are the teachers and students. The materials include policies, funds and finances, shortage of time for English teaching, over crowded classrooms, lack of library resources and audio-visual aids, text books and supervision. The methodology refers to the classroom procedures which are inappropriate in most cases.

Teaching English in India is both challenging and rewarding. One has to teach English under challenging situations. There are, however four inter related but distinct aspects of language teaching and learning, i.e., the cognitive, affective, social and pedagogical, none of which should be neglected or lost sight of.

The recent revolution in the sphere of mass media has considerably enhanced the significance of English. Without the knowledge of English, a young man or woman starting on a career may feel gravely handicapped, whatever may be the career. In fact, he who knows English will find himself better off in every sphere of life. (French 1963 p: 1-2). Traditionally, English has been taught in colleges as a literary and humanistic discipline. The object, apparently, has been to introduce students to some of the classics in English, in the belief that exposure to
great literature can serve important educational objectives. The teaching of English at the college level was scarcely ever intended to provide language instruction. Although exposure to literature can, and frequently does, result in the consolidation and sharpening of language skills, it is doubtful whether college teaching ever had the aim of imparting language skills as a conscious aim.

(Syllabus Reforms in English, 1977 :p:34 I)

STATUS OF ENGLISH AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL

The same situation prevails in many countries in Asia and Africa where English is not spoken as a native language. Even in countries like Russia and China the demand for learning English as an important foreign language is increasing tremendously. In Italy, the birth – place of most of the languages of continental Europe, there is now a strong movement to make English an associate official language of the country.

Because of this great popularity and worldwide distribution, English has the pre-eminent claim to be the medium of international communication. In fact, English has ceased to be the language of its native speakers only, since it has already attained the stature of a world language. If a person knows English, he is sure to be understood anywhere in the world. With the tremendous advancement in modern transport and communication systems, the world has become a global village. Today, we are in closer contact with the different parts of the world than
our forefathers could ever dream of. To express our views in the comity of nations and to develop trade, commerce and diplomatic relations with other countries, we need to have a common medium of communication. A common language is also a great cementing force, for it is through a mutually intelligible language that nations can better understand each other.

English, therefore, has been playing an important role in world affairs and it will be to our own advantage if we continue to learn English as an important foreign language.

ENGLISH AS A LIBRARY LANGUAGE

This term, used by the Indian Education Commission (1964-66) popularly known as the Kothari Commission, seems to be an extremely appropriate choice.

Though the mother-tongue would be the best medium of instruction upto the highest level of education, the commission has said that no student should be awarded a university degree unless he has acquired some proficiency in English. English can be rightly regarded as the key to the store-house of knowledge. Books on all branches of knowledge are available in English. Besides more than 60 percent of the world’s technical journals, newspapers, periodicals etc., are published in English. It might be possible to translate some of the books into the regional language of the country, but not even the richest country with the most sophisticated translating machine can ever hope to cope with the ever growing
stream of knowledge that is being spread through these publications. Therefore, to keep themselves abreast of the latest developments in the field of science and technology, our students will have to acquire a reasonable amount of proficiency in English.

The importance of English as library language can be best described in the words of the Radhakrishnan Commission: (p:7)

English, however, must continue to be studied. It is a language which is rich in literature – humanistic, scientific and technical. If under sentimental urges we should give up English, we would cut ourselves from the living stream of ever growing knowledge. Unable to have access to this knowledge our standards of scholarship would fast deteriorate and our participation in the world movement of thought would become negligible. Its effect would be disastrous for our political life, for a living nation must move with the times and must respond quickly to the challenges of their surroundings. English is the only means of preventing our isolation from the world and we will act inversely if we allow ourselves to be enveloped in the folds of a dark curtain of ignorance. Our students who are undergoing training at school which will admit them either to university or vocation must acquire sufficient mastery of English to give them access to the treasures of knowledge, and in the universities no student should be allowed to take a degree who does not acquire the ability to read with felicity and understand works of English authors.
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHING OF ENGLISH

Before 1800, the East India Company imparted English education only to the children of the Company and Anglo-Indians. Only by the end of the eighteenth century, the British were able to bring the Indian subcontinent under their control and the East India Company paid very little attention to education.

Charles Grant, who is sometimes referred to as the ‘father of modern education in India’, recommended the dissemination of European literature and sciences among the people of India through the medium of English. He had correctly visualized the eagerness of Indian people to learn the English language and predicted that the large number of young people would flock to the English schools and that Indians themselves would, in course of time, be teachers of English. Macaulay’s Minutes on Education (1835) laid the foundation for English education in India. It became the blueprint for education in India, and the goals were clearly stated by Lord Macaulay.

Macaulay’s ‘hidden agenda’ was exposed by Horace Wilson, (1836, p:14-29) who stated

“By annihilating native literature, by sweeping away all sources of pride and pleasure in their own mental efforts, by rendering a whole people dependent upon a remote and unknown country for all their ideas and for the very words in
which to clothe them, we should degrade their character, depress their energies and render them incapable of aspiring to any intellectual distinction.”

An emotional India that emerged as a nation was brought about by anti-colonialism and English education. During the struggle for independence, the ‘enlightened’ natives of India made use of English education and their command of English to subvert the British empire. This is one of the dramatic and unexpected reversals in the history of English education in India.

India’s heritage, aspirations and dreams and strengths were effectively presented in English to the outside world by our thinkers, scholars and leaders during the struggle for political freedom. But all these happened only outside the educational system; the educational system continued, unfortunately, to be colonial in character.

In post-independence India, English not only continues as the language of administration and judiciary but also as the language of education. English continues to be the medium of instruction in universities and colleges and the craze for learning English is growing day by day. There has been no clarity regarding the goals of education or educational planning, in general, and English education and English teaching, in particular.

There were many committees and commissions appointed by the government and headed by eminent persons both before and after independence.
But their recommendations have either not been implemented due to political compulsions, nor have they yielded the desired results. Some of the committees have contradicted their own statements.

To cite an example, the Abbot-Wood Report (1936-37) pleaded for a phase of consolidation rather than expansion and emphasized quality rather than numbers. It also recommended:

a. The education of children in primary schools be based more upon natural interests and activities and less upon book learning.

b. The curriculum of the rural middle school be closely related to the environment of the children.

c. The mother tongue, as far as possible, be the medium of instruction through the high school stage, but English be a compulsory language for all pupils at this stage.

d. The teaching of English be made more realistic.

The above resolutions, stress the impact of mother tongue on L₂.

The Kothari Commission (1964-66) said that English should continue as a library language and as a channel of international communication and that a reasonable degree of proficiency in English was to be stipulated as essential for the award of a degree. With regard to the study of English the commission made two important points: a) English should be the medium of instruction in all major
universities and b) Special units should be set up for the teaching of English as a language skill, as distinct from teaching it as literature. This evidently was in view of the emphasis on English as a library language and as a vehicle of international communication.

The commission also gave a plan for two levels of English teaching and learning:

a. English for those who opt for it from Class V (i.e. for six years)

b. English for those who opt for it from Class VIII (i.e., for three years).

The ‘structural syllabus’ prepared by the London School was brought to India by the British Council in 1952. The Madras English Language Teaching Campaign (MELT) planned by the Government of Tamil Nadu in conjunction with the British council was introduced in 1959. The first English Language Teaching Institute (ELTI) was established in Allahabad in 1954 with the collaboration of the British Council. The All India Seminar on the Teaching of English held at Nagpur in December 1957 took the first move to suggest the revision of the syllabus for teaching English at schools at the national level and the structural approach was accepted. The British Council encouraged and supported such moves to strengthen the teaching of English in India. The Central Institute of English (now known as English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad) was established in Hyderabad in 1958, again with the collaboration of the British Council.
Council, to train teachers of English, to produce teaching materials and ultimately, to improve the standards of teaching English in the country as a whole.

The MELT campaign resulted in the establishment of the Regional Institute of English (RIE) in Bangalore in June 1963 with financial support from all the four southern states. The RIE trains teachers and prepares teaching materials at the school level.

The National Policy on Education (NEP) was formulated in 1968 largely to implement the recommendations of the Kothari Commission Report (1966). The NEP stated that English deserves to be specially strengthened as ‘world knowledge is growing at a tremendous pace, especially in science and technology’ and ‘India must not only keep up with this growth but also make her own significant contribution to it’.

The Study Group Report on the Teaching of English (1971) records the following reasons for the non-implementation of some of the major recommendations of the previous committees.

a. There is a grave shortage of trained and fully qualified teachers of English at almost all stages of the educational system.

b. There have been frequent changes in government policy towards the teaching and learning of English in several states.
c. The State Education departments have been slow in taking decisions, and even where decisions have been taken, enough resources are not available to carry them out.

d. In general, the facilities available for reform and reorganization have been inadequate.

e. The supervision of English teaching in schools has continued to be neglected, with hardly any trained specialists engaged in this task.

f. In majority of schools there is a great gulf between the avowed approach and the actual practice.

The most significant landmark is the National Policy on Education and Programme of Action (NEP and POA 1986), which merely reiterates the 1968 NEP and says:

The Education Policy of 1968 had examined the development of languages in great detail; its essential provisions can hardly be improved upon and are as relevant today as before. The implementation of this part of the 1968 policy has, however, been uneven. The policy will be implemented more energetically and purposefully.

The report of the Curriculum Development Center (CDC), which was set up by the UGC in 1987, submitted its recommendations in 1989.
To cater to the heterogeneous tertiary level student population (the range of linguistic competence is extremely varied since students from both English medium and regional medium schools come together at this level), the General English course is conceived of as comprising different units and modules suited to the different levels of learners. The patterning of the courses is such that students, depending on their linguistic competence at the time of admission, would not only begin their General English programme at different levels but also reach different levels at the time of graduation.

The CDC report in English talking about learner-centered teaching has suggested the streaming of only the learners on the basis of some tests administered. It fails to note that streaming of teachers is equally important since not all teachers have the same competence to teach all the streams of learners.

PRESENT STATE OF AFFAIRS IN TEACHING OF ENGLISH

English teaching in India is the world’s largest democratic enterprise in the world. The pressure of population, pluralism and variety in all areas of life, the colonial legacy, political compulsions, illiteracy, lack of infrastructure, vested interests, the problem of training teachers – a combination of all these make English teaching in contemporary India a highly complex activity.

The ever increasing population and the craze for English have resulted, to an extent, in commercialisation of English Education in India. Not only in terms of
languages, but in culture, religion and ethnicity, India is highly pluralistic; it is
multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-religious and multi-ethnic with large rural
areas. This makes language planning a highly complex and emotional problem.
The colonial legacy is continued in the field of education. The English language
has become a means for power and exploitation.

METHODS AND APPROACHES

An approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of
the language (i.e. linguistic) and the nature of language teaching and learning; it
describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught; it is more theoretical and
forms the basis of any method to be formulated; an approach is axiomatic.

A method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language
material; no part of the method evolved contradicts the principles of the approach
on which it is based; a method is more procedural; within an approach, there can
be several methods.

An approach is the set of basic assumptions and beliefs about language and
language teaching / learning; method is the level at which planning takes place to
put a theory into practice.

As Professor Gokak (1963) points out “The foundational years for the
teaching of English in schools are in the hands of teachers who neither know
enough English nor are familiar with the latest and far-reaching developments in
the pedagogy of English”. A teacher whose English is faulty cannot be a model in the classroom, where English is taught. The methods of teaching English in India are borrowed from other countries and are not very relevant in the Indian context.

The text books are not properly graded and they are not interesting and do not serve the purpose. The examinations are based on rote memorization and do not test the learners’ competency in English. The classrooms are over-crowded and facilities for teaching English using the latest technology are not available in our schools. The quantitative expansion in education and English teaching has resulted in lack of quality. Parents who can afford good education to their children send them to good schools and those who cannot have to be content with what is offered in the name of English teaching. It is in this sense, English teaching in India needs a new focus and thrust.

The Grammar–Translation method was advocated by a German Schoolmaster. The German method was modified in England to suit the needs of middle class education in their schools; the Anglo – German grammar translation method found ready acceptance in India but it was practised in India without the spoken component and with the stress on ‘accuracy’ and ‘using full sentences’; These factors partly account for the obsession with ‘accuracy and using full sentences’ in the English of Indians. English and teaching of English stayed on in India and created a class of Indians with a strong grounding in English.
Every teacher and educator knows that even the curriculum and the most perfect syllabus remain dead unless they are quickened into life by the right methods of teaching and the right kind of teachers. (The Secondary Education Commission, 1952-53, p. 112-3).

Comenius (1692-1670) used pictures for teaching languages and believed that language should not be the object of learning but the outcome, the product.

The work of Michael West (1888-1973) is quite important for us because of the priorities and principles he laid down and the materials he prepared were based on his actual experience of the ELT situation in India – two important principles that West followed in the production of these materials: first was the simplification of texts - and the second was to control the introduction of new words.

The teaching of English is the prime responsibility of the teacher concerned but all are concerned about the standards of teaching of English. What is being attempted in the English classroom should not be undone in the other classrooms and outside. Students get more exposure to English outside the English classroom and that too must be taken into account in the learning of English.

PROBLEMS OF PRESENT DAY TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

As such, this discussion leads us to the problems faced by the present day teachers of English. Teaching English as a second language is hard work; but hard work will nearly always bring success, especially if a teacher persistently exerts
himself / herself to make his / her pupils practice the work. Few people, however, realize what an unceasing expenditure of thought and energy is essential for teaching this language. The successful teacher especially needs vitality and enthusiasm to carry on the necessary oral work during the initial years.

The three things that a teacher needs for his language lessons are — a knowledge of the best and most suitable methods to use, an understanding of the purpose and aim of each method he uses and confidence and acumen in handling the skills with perseverance and the courage to carry on the work with good humour and enjoyment.

In India, English is taught as a second language and not as a foreign language. The distinction between ESL and EFL situation is that in an ESL situation there is enough scope for the learner to get exposed to the target language whereas in an EFL situation, the learner rarely gets an exposure to the target language.

Generally speaking, the teaching of English in our schools was in an undesirable state. The situation was further diluted by non-standardised text books, compromising evaluation system and dearth of competent and trained teachers.

But lately, things seem to have started improving. It has been realised that unless these evils are removed, it will not be possible to raise the standard of achievement in English. Now all the states have adopted in their schools modern
structural syllabus with clearly defined objectives of teaching English at different stages of the course of study. But the situation is yet far from satisfactory, and the evils mentioned above are still dominating the scene to a considerable extent.

Non-availability of competent teachers of English appears to be the most crucial single factor, leading to the gradual deterioration of standards. The best syllabus in the world would not be worth the paper it is written on unless there are teachers to teach it. Similarly, the most effective methods of teaching would dwindle down to mere mechanical rituals if the teacher himself does not know the subject matter.

Moreover, in schools English is not always taught by qualified English graduates. The English classes are given to other subject teachers who without teaching the nuances of English grammar to the students focus their attention on giving a few mechanical drills and covering the portions keeping the annual examinations in mind.

Further with over-crowded classrooms, it would be impossible for the teacher to pay individual attention to the slow learners. The present examination system encourages rote memorization among the students. English is taught as any other subject which is content–based and not as a language which is skill-based. In the lower classes, there is no provision for testing the language skills of the students. There is no room for oral testing; students memorize a few essays and
reproduce them in the examinations, score very high marks and move on to the next class only to repeat the same kind of exercise.

In addition to these situations, the general attitude of students towards English Language needs discussion. The students who enter the tertiary level of education are presumed to possess a certain level of proficiency in English because of their association with the learning of the English language for well over ten/twelve years, whatever may be the medium of instruction at the school level. But unfortunately the proficiency of the majority of the students in English has not improved to the extent desired.

The responsibility of the teacher of English at the tertiary level of education is all the more compounded by the fact that students from the urban and rural backgrounds and students who have had their education so far both in Tamil and English media join the professional courses with varying degrees of competency in the language.

Students, on the other hand, bogged down by the rigorous academic schedule, view the English class as a welcome relief, since they feel the teacher of English can provide information, communication and entertainment in the class. If the teacher is not competent enough to handle the class and deliver the goods, then the whole exercise would become a farce. The teacher of English has the dual
responsibility of educating and entertaining and should keep the class lively and interactive throughout.

**INFLUENCE OF MOTHER TONGUE**

The influence of the mother tongue in learning a second language is an important issue. There is yet another aspect of this subject that does not often receive much consideration; how to make the second language learning contribute to the pupils’ education. The learning of any new language can always help in the linguistic education and in the development of the pupil. There must be no acceptance of the short-sighted view that a mechanical language skill is all that can be produced: for language, whether a vernacular or a foreign tongue can touch life at its fullest and richest.

**MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING ENGLISH**

Macaulay in his ‘Minutes on Education (1835) stresses “the imperial mission of educating and civilizing colonial subjects in the literature and thought of England which in the long run served to strengthen western cultural hegemony”.

Neil Postman and Corles Weingartner in their thought provoking book ‘Teaching as a Subversive Activity’ (1969) have codified the ‘aims and objectives’ of the learning process. Passive acceptance is a more desirable response to ideas than active criticism. There is no teaching; there is only coaching.
and reproduction. English Language Teaching in India has glorified theory over practice and what theory it has is only Received Theory; it is yet to come out of the colonial fold.

In the post-colonial context, teachers have to:

a. Redefine the goals of teaching English in contemporary India.

b. Evolve alternate materials, methods and evaluation systems that will be in tune with the new goals.

c. Induct professionalism in teaching so that educators become accountable to society and recognize the rights of learners to demand quality in education; and

d. Evolve a model of language teaching-learning that will take the teacher from coverage of the portions to command of the language from segregated skills to abilities, from rote memorization to thinking, reasoning and experiencing what is learned.

The process of learning English should consist of expansion and creation and not in reduction and reproduction. Language learning, whether first or second language, is a process of creative construction. This principle must be reflected in the materials used and methods evolved and tests administered.

The frame-work for language teaching should take into consideration a) the dynamic nature of language use and the resultant critical awareness, b) the
synergic process of learning, c) the creative principle and d) the tapping of the hidden resources of the first language learning experience.

Because of the extraordinary costs in training and recruiting teachers of English, a complete education that began with the thorough study of English was within the reach of only a very small proportion of Indians. But even though only this class would receive an English education, their more important function would be to act as teachers and translators of useful books, through which they would communicate to the native literature and native community ‘that improved spirit’ they had imbibed from the influence of European ideas and sentiments. The theory required the few to reach the many. (John Stuart Mill, 1929, P.149).

The specific objectives of teaching English at the school level may be summed up as developing in the pupils the following skills and knowledge:

i. To understand English with ease, when spoken at normal conversational speed.

ii. To speak English with reasonable fluency and accuracy.

iii. To read English with comprehension and at reasonable speed so as to use it as a library language for gathering information and for enjoying reading.

iv. To write neatly and correctly at reasonable speed.

v. To acquire knowledge of the elements of English and rules of use for practical command of the language.
vi. To translate common English words, phrases and sentences into their functional equivalents in mother tongue and vice versa.

vii. To enjoy simple poems in English.

The above list gives the skills in the broadest terms. But to be of any practical use to the classroom teacher, they have to be broken down into their various components.

The other important aspects which have a bearing on defining the objectives of a language course are: i) The situations in life where the students will have to use their language skills and ii) the course content, i.e., lexical items, sentence patterns etc., that the students will learn at different stages of the course. In other words, the teachers must define the framework of life situations and language content within which the language skills are to operate. Such a framework would tell the teachers where exactly they expect their students to use English and what amount of language material should be supplied to them for the purpose.

In fact, the school level learning should aim at enabling the students to use English in ordinary everyday situations such as: carrying on ordinary conversations, listening to television/radio news and talks in English, reading non-technical prose, enjoying simple poems, writing personal letters, applications and reports etc.
Quite a lot of research has been done on the minimum amount of language material required for a practical command of English in everyday life-situations. The linguists are of the opinion that the secondary school students need to master about 275 syntactic structures and about 3000 words.

TEACHING ENGLISH ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

In teaching English, the role of subject teachers is as important as that of the teacher of English. Teachers can demonstrate their competence in the subject only through the appropriate and effective use of the language. Likewise, the teacher of English must also be familiar with the basics of other subjects to teach English in an interesting and relevant way.

Teaching English across the curriculum and syllabus is a two-way traffic. Teachers of other subjects must use appropriate grammatical and lexical forms in their classes; similarly, teachers of English must also use the basic ideas and texts from other subjects to make the teaching of English interact with other subjects.

English teaching can be used effectively to promote understanding among various regions, religions and linguistic groups. The teaching of English must not just be an enterprise of linguistic knowledge; the teaching of English should be an enterprise of acquiring a knowledge of the culture of India.
NEED FOR THE STUDY

The students who join a professional course are a heterogeneous mixture of quick and slow learners, not to mention the average ones. There are students who come from urban English medium schools who are as good as the teacher in the use of language. Another set of students hail from rural areas and who have had their education so far in English medium schools either for a part of their academic career or for their entire school life. Such students desire to speak but are not able to because of reluctance on their part or due to the fear of being ridiculed by their own classmates. The third category of students coming from rural Tamil medium schools who wish to speak in English but are not able to. Then there are students who are rebellious and unwilling to learn. Hence, the students have a mixed feeling towards the English language. It is true that even the best teacher of English cannot cater to the needs of all the different groups of students. It is in this context, the researcher felt the need for the present study. Though methods or approaches evolve periodically, our students find it difficult to acquire or learn the language inside the classroom. The main reason could be the lack of understanding of the expectations of the Indian students. Hence this research tries to evolve certain ways and means of teaching the receptive skills, namely listening and reading, which will, in turn, help in developing the productive skills, namely, speaking and writing, among the students.
Due to the advancements in science and technology, students get to listen more and tend to read less. While watching movies or tele-serials, listening to short stories or music, students use the listening mode. In today's fast-paced world, casual reading has become a dying habit. With the advent of technology, visual perceptions are more and students get more opportunities for listening.

In classroom practice, students neither listen attentively nor read with concentration, they remain passive. They memorize and reproduce the answers very well at the time of examination. Because of rote memorization and reproduction, the writing skills of students seem to have improved. Students and teachers are more concerned with the outcome of examinations and they follow the exam-oriented approach.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This work aims at improving the listening and reading skills of students at the tertiary level undergoing professional degree courses in an engineering college in Erode. Exam-oriented writing of the students seems to be good, but they miserably fail in oral communication. With this fact in view, the researcher has integrated the teaching of listening and reading skills so that the tertiary level students can have a strong foundation and proceed to accomplish the productive skills, namely, speaking and writing. Without improving the listening and reading
skills, the researcher strongly feels that it will be difficult for the teacher to facilitate the learning of speaking and writing skills.

**BULATS AS BENCHMARK**

The students who join an undergraduate programme in Engineering in any of the affiliated colleges of Engineering of Anna University, Coimbatore are required to take the Business Language Testing Services (BULATS) Standard Test at the end of the first semester. This test is designed by University of Cambridge Language Examination Syndicate, (UCLES) for the University of Cambridge ESOL examinations. (English speakers of other languages). This test is administered by the British Council in India.

The BULATS Standard Test concentrates on testing the listening and reading skills of the candidates. It is a service for companies designed to help them find out the level of language skills among their staff, trainees or job applicants. It assesses the language skills which are needed for the workplace, and for students and employees on language courses or on professional/business courses where foreign language ability is an important element of the course.

Candidates are placed in one of the six levels. These levels are expressed as ALTE (Association of Language Testers of Europe) levels, which are linked to the Council of Europe Framework (CEF) levels.
The test is carefully designed to be suitable for a wide range of people at work—technicians, secretaries or managers, in banking, in education or in manufacturing, in administration, research or marketing. It does not require any previous business experience and so it is also suitable for students who may need to use the foreign language in future.

Four different types of tests are offered; BULATS the Standard Test the BULATS computer test, the BULATS writing test and the BULATS speaking test. The standard test lasts 110 minutes and tests listening and reading skills besides testing their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. The listening test consists of four parts, the first and fourth parts will be played twice and the second and third parts will be played only once. The listening test lasts 50 minutes, including the time for transferring the answers to the OMR sheet.

The candidates have to understand short conversations or monologues, take down phone messages, orders, notes etc., listen for gist and identify topic, context or function and listen to extended speech for details and inferences.

The Reading and Language Knowledge test consists of two parts, the first part with 4 sections and the second part with 6 sections. The test lasts 60 minutes including transfer time.

The candidates are expected to understand notices, messages, time tables, adverts, graphs etc., fill in gapped sentences, read passages with multiple choice
questions, fill gaps in short reading passages, match sentences in short reading passages, do multiple choice gap filling exercises, answer multiple choice questions in long reading passages and correct errors.

BULATS makes use of a number of specially designed tests. Each test can be used independently of the others, or they can be used in various combinations. All the tests aim to be relevant to people using the language at work. They cover areas such as descriptions of jobs, companies and products, travel, management and marketing, customer service, planning, reports, phone messages, business correspondence and presentations. The tasks in the test are generally practical ones, e.g. taking a phone message, checking a letter, giving a presentation, understanding an article and writing a report.

All the tests aim to assess candidates across the six levels of the ALTE framework, i.e., the same test is used for all candidates whatever be their level. 0-5 of the ALTE framework corresponds to the Council of Europe Framework levels A1 – C2.

It is in this context, there is a dire need for integrating the teaching of listening and reading skills for the tertiary level learners. Methods of teaching these two receptive skills which would enable the learners to acquire the required competency in the productive skills, speaking and writing have to be formulated.
Adults have two independent systems for developing the ability in second languages, subconscious language acquisition and conscious language learning. These systems are interrelated in a definite way, subconscious acquisition appears to be far more important.

Language acquisition is very similar to the process children use in acquiring first and second languages. It requires meaningful interactions in the target language, in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding. Error correction and explicit teaching of rules are not relevant to language acquisition (Brown and Hanlon, 1970; Brown, Lazden and Bellugi, 1973), but caretakers and native speakers can modify their utterances addressed to acquirers to help them understand and these modifications are thought to help the acquisition process. (Snow and Ferguson, 1977).

Conscious language learning, on the other hand, is thought to have a great deal by error correction and the presentation of explicit rules (Krashen and Seliger, 1975). Error correction, it is maintained, helps the learner come to the correct mental representation of the linguistic generalization.

First language influence may be an indicator of low acquisition or the result of the performer attempting to produce before having acquired enough of the
target language. It is found most often in foreign language, as opposed to second language situations, where opportunities for real communication are fewer and is only rarely seen in ‘natural’ child second language acquisition. Children are usually allowed to go through a ‘silent period’ during which they build up acquired competence through active listening. Several scholars have suggested that providing such a silent period for all performers in second language acquisition would be beneficial.

The classroom should be viewed as a place where the student can get the input he or she needs for acquisition. The classroom may be superior to the outside world for beginners and low-intermediate students, in that the real world is often quite unwilling to provide students with ‘comprehensible input’ (Krashen).

The best language lessons may be those in which real communication takes place, in which an acquirer understands what the speaker is trying to say. Similarly, a reading passage is appropriate for a student, if he or she understands the message. The teacher-talk that surrounds the exercises may be far more valuable than the exercise itself.

Both language aptitude (as measured by standard tests) and attitude (active variables) appear to be related to second language achievement, but are not related to each other. It is possible to have high aptitude and low attitude, low aptitude and high attitude, or both high or both low. What is termed as aptitude is
directly related to conscious learning, while attitudinal factors may be more closely linked to acquisition.

The poor language learner has neither acquisition nor learning taking place in him. This might be the result of both attitudinal factors (lack of interest in the target language and its speakers and/or self-consciousness, high anxiety etc), as well as low aptitude or interest in grammar. The second language student who seems to get nothing from the class or the natural environment may be of this sort.

Acquisition is central and obligatory for real proficiency in a second language, and if, at best, learning is a useful supplement available only in certain situations, and if attitude relates more directly to acquisition than to learning, then Savington (1976) is correct when she says, “Attitude is the single most important factor in second language learning”. One characteristic of the ideal second language class is one in which aptitude will not predict differences in student achievement because efficient acquisition is taking place for all students.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is appropriate to point out the researches taken up in the related area to view the dimensions and perspectives of this research. Salazar, Jesus Jose (2006) of the University of Southern California conducted a study on the ‘longitudinal reading achievement and special education placement of English language learners, as a function of first language (L1) proficiency, second language proficiency (L2) and early
reading skills to clarify the longitudinal relationship between language proficiency and decoding skills at the beginning of elementary school with reading skills at the conclusion of elementary school for English language learners. The English proficiency progress and reading performance of 3,321 students (2,375 from English immersion classrooms and 946 from bilingual education classrooms) were analysed. The contribution of Kindergarten Spanish (L₁) language proficiency, first grade English (L₂) language proficiency, and first grade Spanish and English decoding to fifth grade word reading and reading comprehension was examined through statistical tools like a series of hierarchical linear regression analyses.

While no differences were noted in reading achievement between programs, Spanish language proficiency was a better predictor of word reading and reading comprehension for students in immersion classrooms than for their peers in bilingual classrooms. It also pointed out the importance of entering school with good L₁ language skills since students may use them as a scaffold to help them academically in English. Spanish proficiency was also a slightly better predictor of English proficiency in both second and fifth grade for students in immersion classrooms than for their peers in bilingual classrooms.

Spanish decoding had a medium to large effect in explaining fifth grade learning disability status and placement in special education pull-out programs. English decoding and joint L₁ and L₂ language skills made small, but significant, contributions in accounting for learning disability status and pull-out program placement.
O’ Donovan and Michael Samuel (2006) of St. John’s University (New York) conducted a study on predicting basic reading skills via an aptitude cluster versus global IQ to determine if a theoretically tailored Reading Aptitude Cluster (RAC) would better predict reading skills than global IQ. Participants in the study consisted of 63 first and second graders, who were administered measures of Basic Reading Skill (BRS), measures of cognitive abilities, and a measure of global IQ. Data were analyzed viz Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses. Initial results suggested that the RAC did not explain significant variance in BRS over and above that was explained by global IQ. Limitations associated with this analysis were explained and possible reasons for the lack of predictive power of the RAC were offered. A posteriori analyses based on a reconceptualized regression model provided some support for using the RAC in cognitive assessments in lieu of global IQ for predicting reading achievement. Overall, the results demonstrated that crystallized knowledge is the single best predictor of reading outcomes.

K.N. Ilangoovan (2000) studied the ‘Effectiveness of audio – video intervention in Developing Listening Comprehension in English at Higher Secondary Stage. ‘The objective of the study was to establish the relative effectiveness among the different instructional strategies, viz., Conventional Teaching Method, Media – based Non-interactive Group Instruction and Audio–Video presentation as a support system in developing listening comprehension in English at Higher Secondary Stage. The study concluded that audio-video
intervention was the most effective in developing listening comprehension in English at Higher Secondary Stage.

A need survey of the language skills conducted by G. Venkatraman (2006) among the students of B.Tech courses at SASTRA University, India, reveals that communication skills are among their top priorities. In the globalized context, students of Engineering and technology need a specific set of language skills for their success in education and career. English for science and Technology (EST) poses a challenge to them. Industries are also voicing their concerns about the need for better communication skills among the students of Engineering. The study concluded that English for Science and Technology Programs in Engineering Colleges should be revamped to suit the requirements of the evolving curriculum and world of work outside college.

English for Academic purpose (EAP) researchers such as Christison and Krahnke (1986), Ferris (1998) and Ostler (1980), surveyed L2 students enrolled in subject- matter courses to ascertain their perceptions about the relative importance of language skills and classroom tasks for academic success (Stoller, 2001). Ostler’s early study showed that students felt the greatest need to develop the ability to read textbooks (indicated by 90% of the respondents), followed by the need to listen and take notes (84%), ask questions in class (68%), and write research papers (58%). According to Stoller, faculty and student input have provided the impetus for many of the changes and innovations in curricular modifications.
Hucking and Olson (1983) while talking about the importance of communication skills, refer to the survey conducted by the American Society for Engineering Education to determine which academic subjects are the most needed for engineering careers in industry. Responses were received from 4057 experienced engineers. The result showed that communication skills rank above any other type of skill, capturing five out of the nine “most – needed” categories. The rank secured by each item is given in brackets: technical writing (2) public speaking(4) working with individuals (6) working with groups ( 7) and talking with people (9). In contrast technical skills rank toward the bottom of the list.

Two sorts of linguistic environment are contrasted: artificial or formal environments, found for the most part in the classroom, and natural or informal environments,. Krashen and Seliger (1975) have noted that all language teaching systems utilized for the adult use activities in which linguistic rules are presented one at a time and in which some sort of feedback is present. Other forms of formal instruction are not common to all teaching methods and, while their presence may sometimes be catalytic, are not necessary for learning to take place. Krashen and Seliger also note that these features do not seem to be present in informal environments.

Several studies suggest that adults not only can increase their second language proficiency in informal environments but may do as well as or better than learners who have spent a comparable amount of time in formal situations.
Other studies present evidences that seem to indicate that “exposure” has little or no effect on increasing adult second language proficiency.

Upshur (1968) compared three groups of ten adult ESL students enrolled in a special summer session for law students at the University of Michigan. The first group, who scored the highest on the entrance test, attended seminars and classes during the 7 week period that were conducted in English, but had no extra ESL classes. The second group, who scored lower on the entrance test, also attended law classes and had 1 hour daily of ESL classes in addition. The third group scored the lowest on the pre-test and had 2 hours of ESL classes daily in addition to law classes. At the end of the summer, an alternate form of the pre-test was given. While all the three groups showed some improvement in performance, Upshur’s statistical analysis revealed “no significant effects on language learning attributable to the amount of language instruction” and concluded that “foreign language courses may at this time be less effective means for producing language learning than the use of language in other activities”.

Krashan and Seliger (1975) suggest that motivated second language students are able to provide themselves with the essential ingredients of formal instruction without going to class.

In Mason’s (1971) study, certain foreign students at the University of Hawaii were allowed to follow regular academic programmes without extra ESL classes,
despite the fact that their English placement scores indicated that they should be enrolled in English for foreign student classes. Post-tests given at the end of the semester showed no significant difference in increase in English proficiency between those excused from ESL classes and control group who took the required ESL classes.

Caroll 1967) studied the second language proficiency of American college seniors majoring in foreign languages (French, German, Russian, Spanish). About 25 percent of the total population of senior language majors that year were given form A of the MLA foreign language proficiency test in their language. Carroll’s major finding was that on the average, foreign language majors performed rather poorly; the median score on the MLA corresponded to a Foreign Service Institute rating of 2 plus (out of 5) (between ‘limited working proficiency’ and ‘minimal professional proficiency’). Of more interest here is the relation found between attainment and measures of time spent in different linguistic environments. A strong relationship was found between time spent abroad (in the country where the target language was spoken) and test performance, with those who reported a year’s study abroad doing the best, followed by those who reported a summer abroad or a tour. Both of these groups outperformed those who had never been in the country where the target language was spoken.

A significant relationship was also found between test performance and the extent to which the target language was used in the students home. Those reporting frequent parental use of the target language had higher scores than
students who reported occasional use, and the former group outperformed those whose parents did not or could not speak the target language at home.

It was also found by Carroll that those who started foreign language study early achieved better scores. Those who studied the target language in high school did better than those who started in college. This relationship was independent of that found between proficiency and time spent in informal environments, Carroll, (p: 136) notes that “the simplest explanation of this finding is that the attainment of skill in a foreign language is a function of the amount of time spent in its study” (p. 136).

Krashen and Seliger (1976) and Hartnett (1974) claim that when the effects of “exposure” and formal instruction are compared, it is reliably the case that more instruction means higher proficiency, while more exposure does not necessarily mean more proficiency in ESL. Both studies compared instruction and exposure by matching pairs of foreign students for one of these variables and seeing whether the student who excelled on the other was more proficient in English.

In Krashen and Seliger (1976) exposure was defined as the product of the number of years the student reported having spent in an English speaking country and how much English the student said he spoke every day. In Krashen et al. (1974) students were asked to indicate years spent in an English-speaking country and also to indicate how much English they spoke each day. Subjects with the same number of years spent in the country where English was spoken and the same report of speaking were considered to have the same exposure score.
“First language interference” has had an unusual history in second language acquisition and practice. For many years, it has been presumed that the only major source of syntactic errors in adult second language performance was the performers’ first language (Lado, 1957). Subsequent empirical studies of errors made by second language students led to the discovery, however, that many errors are not traceable to the structure of the first language, but are common to second language performers of different linguistic backgrounds (Richards 1971, Buteau, 1970). The first language, it maintained is but one of several sources of error, and other sources need to be considered.

The issue now is not whether first language influenced errors exist in second language performance, or even what percentage of errors can be traced to the first language in the adult, but rather, where first language influence fits in the theoretical model for second language performance.

Duskova (1969) studied written errors in the compositions of Czech "postgraduate students" and concluded that interference from the mother tongue was plainly obvious in errors of word order and sentence constructions (p.18).

LoCo (1975,p:101s), in a study of American college students learning Spanish and German in the US, a foreign language situation, reported that the "high incidence of interlingua (L₁ interference) errors in German was due to word
order errors.” First – language based errors in Spanish were less numerous and “pertained primarily to adjective position”. The greater word differences between English and German as compared to English and Spanish, accounts for the difference in frequencies in interference of word order errors. Spanish students were more often correct in using English surface structures in utterance initiation due to the greater surface similarity between English and Spanish.

Most language teaching programs, if they are subdivided into components, divide up to the four skills, speaking, listening, reading and writing. Evidences from a variety of sources indicate that this may not be the optimal division. Teachers who are asked to focus on just one of the four skills, or even two (oral versus written), complain that such divisions are artificial. They find it impossible to just focus on just one skill and ignore the others. Oller, in a series of studies, reports that “it is difficult to find any unique meaningful variance in all of the diverse language tests that have been studied and which can be attributed to any one of the traditionally recognized four skills”. (Oller, 1976a,p.144; Oller, 1976b, Oller and Hinofotis, 1976).

Thus the review of the related literature strengthens the views of the researcher. The entire scheme of research has been done in five chapters.

**PLAN OF CHAPTERS**

The first chapter, which is an introductory chapter, lists the present status of English language, traces the history of teaching English in India and enumerates the
problems faced by the present day teachers of English. The chapter also highlights the
general attitude of students towards English language, points out the need for the
present study, differentiates between second language learning and acquisition in terms
of LSRW skills and also reviews the related literature. The various strategies for
improving listening skills are discussed in a detailed manner in the following chapter.

The second chapter discusses the strategies for improving the listening
skill. Listening is an important skill which the students at the tertiary level need to
learn and acquire the other language skills. Hence, the listening skill has to be
inculcated in the students. With this in view, the researcher has devised listening
activities such that the students could learn to listen for gist, listen for specific
information and listen for making inferences.

The third chapter is on the reading strategies and ways and means of
improving the reading skill. The researcher has designed reading activities to
improve the reading comprehension and reading speed of the students. The
reading activities have been tailor-made and aim at the greater development of
language competence of the students.

The fourth chapter highlights the integration of teaching the receptive
skills, namely listening and reading, with a view to improving the productive
skills, speaking and writing and discusses the strategies for improving effective
communication skills. Activities integrating the listening and reading skills have
been planned and administered to the students to enrich their vocabulary, improve critical thinking and increase their reading speed. Ultimately, this is aimed at improving the speaking and writing skills of the students.

The fifth and final chapter summarizes and concludes the discussion. It also lists down the findings of the study. It tries to justify that if the students listen better, they can become good readers and vice versa. Thus these two skills are closely intertwined. An accomplished listener and a reader can use his skills for speaking and writing better. The acquisition of one language skill would naturally lead the students to the improvement of other skills.

CONCLUSION

Thus this chapter starts with the introduction, which describes the status of English at the global and national level. The chapter highlights the acceptance of English in India from a historical perspective apart from discussing the present scenario. The discussion then leads on to the past and present trends in the teaching of English. Further, the chapter lists the methods and approaches in the teaching of English. Then, the need of the present study has been given along with the objectives. The review of related literature is presented followed by the chapterization scheme. Finally, the conclusion sums up what has been presented in the first chapter.
CHPATER I

WORKS CITED

Abbot-Wood Report (1936-37)


James, P, 2000, Teachers in Action, Cambridge University Press.


Macaulay, Minutes on Education (1835)


National Integration Commission, 1962


O’Donovan, Michael Samuel, 2006, Predicting Basic Reading Skills via an Aptitude Cluster versus Global IQ, St. John’s University, New York.


Postman, Neil and Weingartner, Corles, 1969, Teaching as a Subversive Activity.


Salazar, Jesus Jose 2006, Longitudinal reading achievement and special education placement of English Language learners as a joint function of first language (L₁) proficiency, second language proficiency (L₂) and early reading skills, University of South California.


Syllabus Reforms in English, 1977

The Education Commission – Kothari Commission 1964-66

The Secondary Education Commission, 1952

West, Michal, 1924, Teaching English under Difficult Circumstances.