CHAPTER IV
SURVEY OF LITERATURE

Vocabulary - Structures -
Sentence patterns - Textbooks -
Curriculum and standards -
Conclusion.
SURVEY OF LITERATURE

Reading literature connected with the problem under investigation is an important activity in educational research. Advanced countries like America, Russia and Britain have made tremendous progress in methodology, production and evaluation of teaching materials in languages, consequent on research. But it is only after independence that a number of studies have been carried out in the Departments of Education and other allied disciplines in the universities and at the national level and state level research institutes in India. Studies on the teaching of English as a foreign language have been done in western countries as well as in Asian and African countries. But only the studies most pertinent to the topic under investigation have been included in this chapter. The studies reviewed have been classified under the following categories: vocabulary, structures, sentence patterns, textbooks, curriculum and standards.

1. Vocabulary

Vocabulary being the first step in learning English research on it is of great significance. The secondary school pupil has neither time nor the necessity to master the whole of
English vocabulary. Experts in teaching English as a foreign language laid great stress on selection and grading of vocabulary, the principles for its selection being frequency, range, usability, teachability and classroom needs. According to Bright and McGregor,¹

The need to make textbooks accessible and teaching comprehensible to pupils is the justification for vocabulary selection and control.

In a pioneering effort to prepare a word list Prof. Thorndike succeeded and he published the list in 1921. By counting the occurrence of words in four and a half million running words he established the frequency of the commonest 5000 words. In the latest edition of Thorndike's book² the list is extended to 30,000 words selected from 50,000 more words from 200 sources. The list was compiled to meet the needs of American children learning to read. In 1926 Horn produced a 10,000 word writing vocabulary based on a straight frequency count of personal and business letters. Faucett and Maki in 1932 published a frequency list titled "A study of English word values", on the basis of Thordike's list but with a new credit number for each word, determined not only by its frequency but also its range and usefulness. The authoritative word list was prepared by Messrs. Thorndike, Palmer, Faucett and Michael


West in collaboration, in the year 1934, known as the Interim Report on vocabulary selection. In its revised form "A General Service List,\(^3\) of English Words", the various meanings and uses of the selected words have been arranged in the light of the semantic count and the figures of the semantic count have been added to indicate their relative importance. Dr. West is entirely responsible for the revised list.

Mr. C. K. Ogden established the system of Basic English. In his book "The meaning of meanings" he made an analytical study of the semantic value of English words.

A good number of studies on vocabulary has been conducted at M. Ed. and Ph. D. levels and also in the various Institutes in India. The following are the relevant studies attempted on English vocabulary. Pandya,\(^4\) Nadkarni,\(^5\) and Hehar,\(^6\) conducted studies on English vocabulary of pupils in Std. VII. The details of these studies are not available.

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Nineteen books have been examined in the Methods Department, Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad with a view to assessing their comparative efficiency in respect of vocabulary. The studies reveal that writers and editors pay little attention to the vocabulary of S.S.L.C. and Matriculation Readers and do not plan any systematic vocabulary expansion.

Kachroo's investigation into the vocabulary aspect of the New Kashmir Reader No.1, confirms the association of poor learning with infrequent repetition of words.

An investigation carried out in Ranchi by Mrs. Helen Barnard on behalf of the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad, shows that the student in the first year of college knows some 1500 words out of the General service list of 2000 words and as for the student's knowledge of structures, he knows about hundred structures.

Keskar at the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad has produced a list of 3500 word

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8 Ibid., pp.67-72.
vocabulary for the teaching of English in Indian schools and
the important observations are (i) this list will help textbook
writers as well as teachers to set their targets (ii) this list
gives a realistic and practical suggestions regarding producing
materials for textbooks to be used in high schools.

In Kerala the following studies have been carried out
at the M.Ed. level, on English vocabulary.

Sukumaran Nair\(^{11}\) made a study to find out the rela-
tionship between word fluency as a means of achievement of
pupils in the language and the findings are:

1. There is high correlation between word fluency
   in English and achievement of pupils in that
   language.

2. The word fluency in English indicates the level
   of total achievement of pupils.

3. There is relationship between achievement in
   English and total achievement.

4. Sex does not appear to be a major factor
   affecting word fluency.

5. Difference in word fluency in English of pupils
   belonging to highly educated parents and illiterates
   is also found to be significant at .05 level.

6. Those pupils who listen to news broadcast in
   English have a higher word fluency in the
   language.

7. Reading of books and periodicals in English has
   contributed to the word fluency in that language.

8. Newspaper reading has also helped children in
   increasing the word fluency.

\(^{11}\) S.N. Sukumaran Nair, *A Study of word fluency as a means of
achievement in the language*. Master's Dissertation,
Kerala University, 1967.
Sreedharan Nair¹² analysed the vocabulary, structures and sentence patterns in the Kerala English Reader for Std.X, 1969-70. The following are the main findings:-

1. The number of different words used in the prose passages in the reader is very large.
2. The density index of vocabulary in the reader is very high.
3. The frequency of occurrence of different words is not satisfactory.
4. The percentage of new words that occur less than five times is very high.
5. Spacing of repetition of words has not been done carefully. Some new words occur three or four times in consecutive lines in one passage and do not recur in the rest of the reader.
6. The use of structures in the reader can be said to be satisfactory.
7. The structures progress from simple to difficult.
8. The use of sentence patterns in the reader is satisfactory.
9. An attempt has been made to attain a certain level of literary excellence by selection from renowned writers.

Gilbert\textsuperscript{13} made a study of the vocabulary and structures in the Kerala English Reader for Std.X, 1970. His major findings are:

1. The number of different words used in the prose passages in the Reader is very large.
2. The density index of vocabulary varies from 2.3 : 1 to 3.2 : 1.
3. The number of different words in each passage is very high.
4. The proportion of previously encountered words to new words is not consistent with the density index.
5. The distribution of new words is not systematic.
6. More than 70\% of new words occurs only once.
7. The use of structures in the Reader is not satisfactory.
8. There are 58 structures to be learned. The density index is very high.
9. The structures used in the Reader are useful to the learner.

The purpose of Daniel's\textsuperscript{14} study was to measure the written vocabulary attainment in English of pupils in Std.VIII in the revenue district of Trivandrum and his findings are:

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{14} P.E.Daniel, \textit{A study of the vocabulary attainment in English of pupils of Std.VIII.} Master's Dissertation, Kerala University, 1971.
\end{flushleft}
1. The word fluency of pupils was not very high.

2. Boys and girls can be differentiated on the basis of their vocabulary attainment scores, with the boys having higher scores.

3. Rural schools and urban schools can be differentiated on the basis of the vocabulary attainment scores, with the urban school pupils having higher scores.

4. High achievers and low achievers can be differentiated on the basis of the vocabulary attainment scores.

5. Pupils who speak English outside class hours during the conversation and pupils who do not do so can be differentiated on the basis of their vocabulary attainment scores, with the former group having higher scores.

6. Pupils who preferred English to all other subjects in the curriculum and others who do not like English can be differentiated on the basis of their vocabulary attainment, with the former group having higher scores.

7. Pupils who indulge in any kind of creative working in English and those who do not write so can be differentiated on the basis of their vocabulary attainment scores, with the former group having higher scores.

Koya Kunju\textsuperscript{15} analysed the vocabulary, structures and sentence patterns in the Kerala English Reader for Std.VI. The findings are given below:

1. The vocabulary used is far above the mental level of a second year pupil in English because total number of words used in the prose passages is very high and the total number of different words goes to a relatively high level.

\textsuperscript{15}Koya Kunju, \textit{A study of the vocabulary, structures and sentence patterns in the Kerala English Reader for Std.VI}, Master's Dissertation, Kerala University, 1974.
2. The density index is 10.8 : 1. This demands exertion and a long time from the pupils to learn the different words.

3. The density indices for each of the passages vary from 2.8 : 1 to 4.8 : 1.

4. The frequency of occurrence of different words in the Reader is also not commendable.

5. The percentage of occurrence of new words is not satisfactory.

6. Each and every sentence used by the writer contains either a structure or its repetition.

7. All the thirty structures except the last one in the syllabus for Std.VI have been used prudently.

8. The sentences in each passage serve only as materials for the illustration of structural items.


2. Structures

Twentieth century saw a good deal of research in English structures. The pioneering work on structures was done by Faucet, Palmer, Dr. West and others. The Institute of Education, London University under the leadership of Prof. Bruce Pattison and Dr. J.A. Noonan has done further work in the grading of structural words and patterns and their lists of graded structures are the chief source of the new English syllabus of many Indian states. In the U.S.A., Prof. Charles Fries conducted research on structures in the English Language Institute of the University of Michigan. In India, the Central Institute of
English and Foreign Languages, Hyderabad and Regional Institute of English, Allahabad are doing work on structures.

3. Sentence patterns

To secure a practical command of English pupils should know well how the word order, the structural words and the word forms are employed to construct sentences or meaningful patterns of expression. Work on pattern was carried out by the Institute of Research in English Teaching Department of Education, Tokyo before the second world war and some of the results of their work is found in "A guide to pattern and usage in English" by A.S.Hornby.16

Pavri17 made an analytical survey of English sentence and phrase patterns and vocabulary selection in some of the standard Readers in use in the city of Bombay during the early stages of child's study of languages. Details of the study are not available.

Noam Chomsky18 introduced a basic concept that of a group of "kernal sentences". A kernal sentence is "simple,

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active, declarative" and Chomsky thinks that all other sentences are derived from Kernal sentences by means of "transformations".

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Bateman reports an experiment which sought to determine the effect on students sentence construction of a certain approach to sentence structure. The study was undertaken in working with a group of eighth grade students at the University school, Ohio state in 1959. The following generalisations have borne out in the study.

1. The development of a description of the structure of English through modern linguistic procedures would seem to make it possible for students to learn to manage the structures of their language with great facility.

2. It seems likely that as their familiarity with the structures of the language grows they may be able to express more complex relationships of thought in their writing.

French\(^{20}\) throws much light on the patterns with his findings that statement in English follow one of the patterns listed below:

1. Two main items \(s + v\).
2. Three main items \(s + v + o\).
3. Also three main items \(s + v + \text{subject complement}\).


4. Four main items \( s + v + i + o + \) complement.

5. Also four main items \( s + v + o + \) object complement.

6. There ..........

4. Textbooks

The following studies on textbooks in English have been carried out in the various universities and institutions in India.

Gor\(^{21}\) conducted a critical enquiry into the existing textbooks in English for secondary schools in the state of Bombay. Somasundaram\(^{22}\) made a study on the English textbooks for the lower and higher secondary schools in India. Narayanan\(^{23}\) carried out a critical study of textbooks based upon the revised syllabus in English for secondary schools of Madras.

Nadkarni\(^{24}\) completed a study of textbooks of English in Std.VIII in Bombay state. Ghael\(^{25}\) made a linguistic analysis

\(^{21}\) N.A.Gor, *A critical enquiry into the existing textbooks in English for secondary schools in the State of Bombay*, Master's Dissertation, University of Baroda, 1955.

\(^{22}\) A.J.Somasundaram, *English Textbooks for the lower and higher secondary schools in India*, Master's Dissertation, Osmania University, 1956.


of English selection for the S.S.L.C. Examination of 1959-60. Thomas\(^{26}\) completed a study of textbooks and teaching methods in Telingana. Kapoor\(^{27}\) investigated into the suitability of present English textbooks for high school classes. The details of these studies are not available.

Dangel\(^{28}\) made a study on English Reader Book V, Department of Education, Government of Maharashtra. His findings are that the printing and proof reading continue to be satisfactory, the illustrations though few, are not below the mark, the subject matter is varied and interesting and the style is racy. He has also pointed out some flaws in the Reader.

Renganna\(^{29}\) conducted a study on "Procedure in connection with the selection of Textbooks for primary and secondary grades.


The Central Bureau of Textbooks developed criteria for evaluating textbooks and the All India Council for Secondary Education initiated efforts in developing a new curriculum at the secondary stage. The NCERT undertook studies about allocation of time to various subjects at school stage, improving the method of teaching and developing new textbooks.

The Department of Textbooks, NCERT undertook nine studies which developed the basic principles and procedures in preparation and evaluation of textbooks in various subjects. Some of the major procedures for evaluation are:

1. Evaluation by a panel of experts
2. Try out of books
3. Pooling the opinion of teachers, supervisors, pupils
4. Content analysis technique
5. Empirical or experimental approach and
6. Action research design technique

In an unpublished report prepared for the U.S. Office of Education, Earl W. Stevick of the Foreign Service Institute, Department of States, suggests various criteria for the evaluation of language teaching materials. He sees three qualities in

30 Preparation and Evaluation of Textbooks in English, Principles and Procedures, Dept. of Textbooks, NCERT, New Delhi, Jan. 1970.
evaluating a given lesson, viz. strength, lightness and transparency.

Thomas A. Durr, has made a review of three textbooks in English for the first year of the lower secondary level. From a study of the component content, the skill content and teachability factor of the three books, he ranked them as "good, fair and poor". His conclusion is that both English for Thai and Intermediate English course could be vastly improved with a few alterations, additions, correction etc. According to him a Direct Method English course seems to be entirely unacceptable in terms of current language practices and only lends itself to a continuation of formal, grammar-translation teaching aid.

The purpose of Aurora's study was:

to find out the weakness of the present syllabus for the higher secondary classes and to suggest ways of building up more comprehensive and detailed syllabus. The following are the significant trends of thought revealed.

1. An effective syllabus should clearly indicate the aims and objectives of teaching English and the order of priority in which the various skills are to be taught.

2. It should also contain a list of activities, reading materials, audio-visual aids and illustrative exercises and tests for measuring pupils' achievement.

3. A combination of essay type and objective tests could be used for measuring pupil's mastery in various skills.

4. Emphasis on functional grammar and usage, as in the present syllabus, should be maintained.

5. Apart from essay, precis, letter and translation, many other exercises could be introduced for composition.

6. Attempt should be made to get more suitable textbooks written along lines suggested in the present syllabus.

7. A variety of books for non-detailed study may be introduced.

8. To see that spoken English is not neglected while teaching, there should be an oral test at the final examination.

George's\textsuperscript{35} study proved that the achievement of pupils taught by using audio-visual aids is greater than that of pupils taught by usual methods and that the use of audio-visual aids does not require more time than what is required for ordinary teaching.

\textsuperscript{36} Long Kumar has made a study on the place of English poetry in senior high school stage. The details of the study are not available.

The purpose of Theodore's\textsuperscript{37} study was to make an objective assessment of appreciation of English poetry by a

\textsuperscript{35} A.George, An enquiry into the scope and effectiveness of Audio-Visual Instruction in improving English teaching in Kerala State in the first three years of school course. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Kerala, 1966.

\textsuperscript{36} I.C.Long Kumar, The place of English poetry in senior high school stage. Master's Dissertation, Allahabad University, 1956.

selected group of Indian students. Some of the salient findings are:

1. The students feel that the value of studying poetry is real and aesthetic.
2. Reading poetry gives pupils an enjoyment and capacity for literary appreciation.
3. Poetry enables pupils to acquaint themselves with poetic minds.

Sathyam made a study on the objectives of teaching poetry in general and a scrutiny of the poetical selections in English. The major findings are:

1. The poems of classes VIII and IX are either too simple or too difficult.
2. The poems of class VIII are either too short or too long.
3. The poems "Home they brought the warrior Dead" is not suitable for the high school classes.
4. The poems in the class IX are not so charming for the students. Other possibilities should be explored.
5. The poems of class X are presented in the chronological order of the poets but not in the principle of difficulty level.
6. The poems are not carefully selected to suit the class X students.
7. Indian poets present more difficulties for high school student with their language.

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38 G. Sathyam, Objectives of teaching poetry in general and a scrutiny of the poetical selections in English to see how far these objectives are fulfilled at the high school stage. Master's Dissertation, Osmania University, 1972.
Madhava Kurup made an enquiry into the common difficulties experienced in the teaching of English by secondary school teachers. The main findings are:

1. There is dearth of well qualified and experienced teachers who can handle English classes.
2. Pupils are below the expected standard when they enter the secondary school.
3. The class is crowded.
4. Audio-visual aids are inadequate.
5. There is considerable difficulty in the matter of textbooks. Content of textbooks does not appeal to the pupils. Textbooks are not attractive.
6. Examination is defective.
7. Parents have little contact with teachers.
8. Home conditions of the majority of pupils are very poor and in the home they do not get conditions conducive to learning.
9. There is no subject council for English in schools to review the work.
10. Short in-service training, summer camps, and refresher courses are rarely conducted.
11. No proper attention is paid to teachers' welfare and service conditions.
12. The time allotted for English work is not adequate in the face of the present conditions existing in schools.

5. Curriculum and standards

A few studies on curriculum and standards are noted here.

GothiWereker⁴⁰ made a comprehensive study of the secondary school curriculum in the province of Bombay. He criticised the curriculum to be narrow in aim, being a leftover of the British rule and recommended reconstruction of a new curriculum catering to all aspects of the development of the learner.

Dube⁴¹ made an investigation into the causes of fall in the standard of English. Buby⁴² made an analysis of curriculum change in the secondary schools during the past 15 years.

Annamma⁴³ carried out a study on "Opinion of teachers on how to raise standards of achievement of pupils in school subjects." The conclusions are noted below:

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1. Of all subjects, standard of achievement of pupils in English has fallen very much.

2. The primary reason, which makes teachers to think that standards have fallen, is that pupil's knowledge of the subject is not very deep, which according to them, is an offshoot of the present system of examination. The performance of pupils in employment or in a service is not very encouraging.

3. The fall in standard is a joint product caused by the interaction of a combination of causes.

4. Expansion of education has lowered the quality of education.

5. The parents are often too poor and ignorant to provide the material and psychological conditions conducive to the proper growth of the children.

6. Overcrowding in schools has to be stopped and teachers should not be asked to teach those subjects in which they are not trained.

7. English in all classes should be taught by those specially trained for the purpose.

8. Standards can be raised by improving the present textbooks and syllabi.

A similar study in this area was conducted by Phobe Thankam Manuel Awkeela and her major findings are:

1. Standards have fallen because of the over-crowded classes.

2. The lack of minimum equipments and appliances in schools is to a large extent responsible for the fall in standards.

3. The heterogeneous character of the group of students in the class is a serious handicap for achieving higher standards.

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4. Overloaded syllabii are greatly responsible for the fall in standards.

5. A good number of parents are of opinion that the present curriculum is inadequate to give a good standard to pupils and they remark that difficult portions should be eliminated and more matter useful for daily life should be added.

6. Good libraries with periods for library work are essential to raise the standard of pupils.

7. According to a large majority of parents poor textbooks have caused standards to fall.

8. In the opinion of pupils textbook should be easy to read and understand and should contain matter useful for life.

Chanana\(^45\) completed a historical survey of the high school curriculum in the Punjab during the 20th century and advocated a new and effective secondary curriculum.

Cheriyan (Molly)\(^46\) made a further investigation into the concept of falling standards, which revealed the following:

1. The most important reason for fall in educational standard is overcrowding in classes.

2. Ineffective primary education.

3. Poor home environment of pupils.

4. Overloaded syllabus is an important reason for the fall in standards.


\(^{46}\) Cheriyan (Molly), *A further investigation into the concept of falling standards*. Master's Dissertation, University of Kerala, 1967.
5. Rapid change in educational policy.
7. Discontentment of teachers.
8. Ineffective methods of teaching.
9. Lack of proper equipments.
10. Lack of co-operation of parents in school and its activities.
11. Defective system of examination.
12. Student participation in politics.
14. Students are not adequately motivated.
15. Poor textbooks.
16. Majority of pupils dislike the textbooks because they are not easy to read and understand and that matter contained in them is not useful for life.

K.S. Pillai investigated into the changes in the content and scope of the primary and secondary school curriculum in Kerala during the last 30 years since 1934. The main findings are:

1. The syllabus was revised in 1962, but people feel that there is still scope for improvement in it.
2. English is taught as second language, its syllabus has been considerably reduced over years.
3. Syllabus of Hindi which is taught as third language has been made heavier and in line with the expected standard.

K.S. Pillai, An investigation into changes in the content and scope of the primary and secondary school curriculum in Kerala during the last 30 years since 1934. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Kerala, 1968.
4. Standard of Mathematics has been falling and its syllabus needs immediate revision to make it keep pace with the time.

5. Practical bias and fusion programme are noteworthy features in general science.

6. It appeared that in the light of aims and outcomes listed, the syllabus fulfilled the basic requirements as far as its content is concerned.

7. The question papers set in the examination showed the extent of the content tested every year.

8. It showed that the standard of achievement in English has fallen whereas that of Hindi risen and that of Malayalam remained more or less constant.

9. Question paper coverage in Mathematics was found to be exhaustive.

10. The ability to discriminate between essential and non-essential and deep knowledge of subject matter were needed to score high in science subjects.

11. Training in setting objective questions and improved scoring procedures were definitely going to help in raising the standards of examinations.

12. Nationalised textbooks have been found cheaper and therefore accessible. Their preparation should be entrusted to the experts and they should be revised after every three years by committees of experts.

Rajagopal's study has revealed the following:

1. Use of translation method and poor knowledge of English on the part of teachers have caused the fall in standard of learning English.

2. Inadequate syllabus, unsuitable textbooks and very poor methods of instruction are some of the most potential factors in deteriorating the learning situation.

Conclusion

The studies reviewed above indicate that standard of achievement in English has fallen. A few of the said studies also prove that unsuitable textbooks are partly responsible for deterioration of standards in English. The review, therefore, naturally leads to the hypothesis designed for the present study.