CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem
1.2 Need and Significance of the Study
1.3 Statement of the Problem
1.4 Definitions of Key Terms
1.5 Hypotheses of the Study
1.6 Objectives of the Study
1.7 Methodology in Brief
1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study
1.9 Organisation of the Research Report
Introduction

“Language is at the centre of human life. We use it to express our love or our hatred, to achieve our goals and further our careers, to gain artistic satisfaction or simple pleasure, to pray or to blaspheme. Through language we plan our lives and remember our past; we exchange ideas and experiences; we form our social and individual identities. Language is the most unique thing about human beings”.

(Cook, 2008)

1.1 Background of the Problem

The twenty-first century has witnessed the impact of globalization, the advancement in technology, the emergence of internet and World Wide Web (WWW), all of which resulted in a craving for high quality education. In this flux of transformations geographical and physical boundaries are being transcended by technology and people can communicate with others across the globe in real time using their language skills. So language skills empower people to reach out to the world around them. Information communication technologies can also expand access to various language programmes and offer access to up-to-date materials from the countries of target language, offering learners and teachers a plethora of language learning materials in different modes. These technological advancements also play a significant role in making the target language and culture more tangible.

The perspective of people towards education has also metamorphosed. Modern education transcends the narrow academic approach and takes up on itself added responsibilities for providing varied experiences that would help the individual to realize his full potential for intellectual, emotional and physical growth. We should equip the students to elevate themselves in a position to prepare the challenges of the future. It is for this reason that great emphasis is being placed on formulating and implementing educational innovations according to the demands of the time.
**Introduction**

The era of technology creates an information explosion and the English language inadvertently is the medium of communication. In today’s world, the importance of English language is evident in all fields of life. In the 21st century, English is regarded as the major international language, and the number of bilingual users of English will far surpass the number of its native speakers (McKay, 2002). This highlights the significance of the English language. Thus, English came to be considered as the global language. It is also very difficult to neglect English because of its rich literature. The importance of English is reflected in all walks of life. English is the language of library, science and technology, commerce, higher education, administration and employment. English enjoys the prestigious position of an international language. In brief, English as an international language is significant in human life because it becomes a bridge between countries in the world to interact so that, in this modern era, everyone learns English in order to face the challenges of life. English has thus become the most effective language for sharing experiences and strengthening our cultural identity all across the globe.

The popularity of English language caused people to pursue English Education with great enthusiasm than ever before. Thereby, English Education came to occupy a place of prime importance in the educational scenario of India. The University Education Commission (1948) as well as the Secondary Education Commission (1952-1953) have emphasized the need for teaching and learning English at Secondary School and University levels. The Kothari Commission Report (1964) stated that English should be the most useful library language in higher education and our significant window on the world. The National Policy on Education (1986) has recommended that teaching-learning of English be strengthened as it is the language of science and technology.

The importance of English for Indian students should be realised based on the fact that it is an international language, a link language, a library language and its role as a window to the rapid progress of technology and
Introduction

advances in scientific knowledge (Dash & Dash, 2007). The importance of English in education and student life cannot be ignored. As a result, English is considered one of the important subjects in Secondary Education of Kerala considering that it will enhance the ability of students to use English, which is very valuable and at the same time transferable to other situations of life.

Establishing objectives for the teaching of English

The objectives for teaching English can be established on a number of levels:

i. an integrative and content level (Language as a means and expression).

ii. linguistic and instrumental level (Language as a semiotic system and an object of learning).

iii. an affective level of interpersonal relationships and conduct (Language as a means of expressing values and judgements about oneself and others).

iv. a level of individual learning needs (remedial learning based on error analysis).

v. a general educational level of extra-linguistic goals (Language learning within the school curriculum).

(Piepho, 1981)

General objectives of teaching English in Schools

English education aims to enable students to:

♦ understand English when spoken at a reasonable speed.
♦ speak English with accurate pronunciation.
♦ read English with good stress, rhythm and intonation.
♦ read English silently at a reasonable speed with good comprehension.
♦ write English neatly and legibly.
♦ nurture the creativity of the learners.
Introduction

♦ develop pupil’s imagination.
♦ develop a taste for English literature.

Problems of English language teaching

The current scene in the country regarding English language teaching calls for special efforts to be made to remedy a number of limitations and to solve the essential problems of teaching English. Several problems can be attributed to the deficiency of English language teaching like lack of teachers’ competencies, interference of mother tongue, lack of general agreement on the objectives of teaching English, competent teachers’ preference to urban schools, defects in evaluation, teaching through translation, absence of language lab, and defects in preparation of text books.

A persistent problem faced by most teachers of English is to develop and sustain genuine interest of Students for learning English. Teachers should find creative ways to improve students’ interest in English. Teachers will be able to drive the students as well as to sustain their interest in English language learning if they can provide activities that are:

♦ interrelated between in-class and out-of-class,
♦ communicative (game type) and integrative (short/small activities and larger activities),
♦ pleasant, safe and non-threatening,
♦ enthusiastic,
♦ group-based,
♦ meaningful or relevant, and
♦ challenging.

(Hussin, Maarof and D'Cruz, 2000)

Another daunting task that requires grave concern is the judicious selection of methods and materials for teaching English. The inappropriate
methods and the materials used for learning English fail to provide real world situations or to develop students’ communicative ability in English. The teachers’ favouritism towards traditional methods and conventional teaching materials create problems in the teaching of English. Although a large number of innovative methods, approaches, techniques and learning materials have emerged, teachers are still pre-occupied with traditional methods. This points to the need for a re-orientation in the teaching of English in India.

As the quality of education depends mainly on the quality of the teaching-learning process, innovation in English Education is important. In this environment, it is important to create opportunities for students to learn in new ways to meet their individual needs. The electronic media can bring real English to the field of English language teaching. The extent to which teaching and learning become productive depends on the particular environment in which it happens. Thus, the teachers and learners of English need an environment which provides adequate resources to support English Education.

In Kerala, the IT@School Project is fully integrated into the existing educational scenario. Through such elaborate Capacity Building processes, the Project aims to empower the existing teachers in schools to use the various facets of Information and Communication Technology as an educational tool for teaching different subjects. The Project has provided Broadband internet connectivity to schools along with detailed usage norms to schools so as to ensure safe and secure browsing. Laptops and Multimedia Projectors have also been supplied to these schools for shifting the mere IT lab based trainings to the class rooms. So it is evident that a suitable environment has been organized in the schools of Kerala for Web Integration in the classrooms. Thus, the Teachers of English can utilise this supportive environment by providing Web resources to the students and help them learn English.
1.2 Need and Significance of the Study

The advent of the Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW) has affected every aspect of education and transformed the way of teaching-learning and second/foreign language teaching-learning is no exception. In the educational scenario of Kerala, the learners of English need a supportive environment to enhance their learning of English, as their situation differs from that of learners of the first language.

The World Wide Web is an Internet-based network of information resources that combines a multitude of text and multimedia. The World Wide Web is a hypermedia system allowing users to navigate in all directions and through all kinds of information by following links (Vyas & Patel, 2009). The Web has become a popular reservoir of resources that can be conveniently accessed. In the area of language learning, the Internet serves mainly as a publishing, communication, and information tool. In its information-providing function, the Internet is utilized as a virtual library in which students can search for and receive information. With the creation of the World Wide Web, it has become possible and feasible for language teachers to make effective use of instructional material, especially in teaching language and culture (Chen, 2008).

Web resources pertinent to various purposes and topics offer potential teaching materials that serving as valuable pedagogical inputs for a language classroom. In fact, the most frequent classroom use of the Internet is to search for Web resources to gather information (Grabe & Grabe, 2001). Thus, the Web plays a major role in creating a resource rich environment by providing a wide range of exposures to English. Web Integration in the classroom helps to improve the efficiency of the teaching-learning process and especially helps students to carry out the learning tasks more effectively. Web Integration serves as leverage for the enormous success of the Web Browser to access services and information on the Web. Web Integration allows for fast integration of any Web-browsable content, data, and applications into portals,
wireless devices and Web services. Web Integration allows end users to access the data and functions of a server-hosted application through an Internet browser window. Schacter (1999) found that students with access to any of a number of technologies (such as computer assisted instruction, integrated learning systems, simulations and software that teaches higher order thinking, collaborative networked technologies, or design and programming technologies) show positive gains in achievement on researcher constructed tests, standardized tests, and national tests.

Another area of interest in language learning is the role of anxiety on performance. Learning a foreign language can be a challenging task. One of the most important affective variables in learning a foreign language is foreign language anxiety. Language Anxiety is the feeling of uneasiness, worry, nervousness and apprehension experienced by learners when learning or using a language especially a second or foreign language. These feelings may stem from any second language context whether associated with the productive skills of speaking and writing, or the receptive skills of reading and listening. Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1991) conceptualized foreign language anxiety as a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process. Although all aspects of using and learning a foreign language can cause anxiety, listening and speaking are regularly cited as the most anxiety-provoking of foreign language activities. Batumlu and Erden (2007) examined the relationship between foreign language anxiety and students’ English achievement and found that for all levels of students, there was a significant negative relationship between students’ foreign language anxiety and their achievement in English. According to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986), the causes of Foreign Language Anxiety have been broadly separated into three main components: communication apprehension, test anxiety and fear of negative evaluation. Communication apprehension is the anxiety experienced when speaking with or listening to other individuals.
Test-anxiety is a form of performance anxiety associated with the fear of doing badly, or indeed failing altogether. Fear of negative evaluation is the anxiety associated with the learner’s perception of how other onlookers, instructors, classmates or others; may negatively view their language abilities.

The interest of Students has also has to be taken into consideration to ensure successful learning of English. Teachers also have to find practical ways to improve students’ interest in learning English. Students’ interest in the English language learning process can be developed if simple and useful activities are incorporated within any English language lesson. Lungit (2014) identifies a positive relationship between students’ interest in learning English with their academic achievement.

Teachers have to organise appropriate learning situations to arouse the students’ interest to learn and appreciate English language. A learning situation that has a "low affective filter" (Krashen, 1987) helps the learners learn to use the language in a non-threatening and fun environment that may improve students’ interest in learning English. Otherwise, learners will feel uncomfortable and insecure which will further induce a "psychological barrier" to communication and learning (Littlewood, 1995).

All these considerations seem to indicate that the interactive nature of language classrooms and their continual requests on learners to communicate are likely to make language classrooms more anxiety-inducing than other classroom contexts. In fact, communicating orally in the foreign language has often been considered, by both teachers and learners, as more anxiety-inducing than the practice of other language skills (Young, 1992). MacIntyre and Gardner (1991) found that anxiety is one of the best predictors of success in second language learning. Gardner (1985) found high correlation between anxiety and second language proficiency and reported that learners with low Language Anxiety have high achievement in second language learning. Achievement in English indicates the relative level of academic accomplishment in English by the students. Several research have found that
low anxiety is usually associated with high academic achievement, which refers to how students deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish different tasks given to them by their teachers (Marcos-Llinás & Garau, 2009).

The use of Web resources becomes essential for the teachers and learners, especially for the non-native teachers and learners of English to carry out their teaching-learning task effectively. Some of the studies that were conducted in India and abroad have gone through some or other aspects of Language Anxiety and Achievement in connection with different variables, but not a single study has been reported on the effectiveness of Web Integrated Language Learning in relation with Language Anxiety and Achievement in English. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to throw light in this area, which is felt to be significant and likely to yield worthwhile results.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The purpose of the present study was to test the effectiveness of Web Integrated Language Learning on English Language Anxiety, Interest in English and Achievement in English among Secondary School Students. The relative effectiveness of the Web Integrated Language Learning with Activity Oriented Method of Learning was also to be studied among Secondary School Students. All these intents and purposes were adequately and appropriately woven into the fabric of the present study. The topic of investigation was thus entitled “Effectiveness of Web Integrated Language Learning on Language Anxiety and Achievement in English among Secondary School Students.”

1.4 Definitions of Key Terms

The key terms that need clarification are defined below.

1. **Effectiveness**: It stands for the outcome of the study when the influence of one factor or condition is dependent on the presence or absence of another factor or condition (Good, 1973).
**Introduction**

In this study **Effectiveness** indicates the desired result due to the cause of particular teaching strategies, viz. Web Integrated Language Learning and Activity Oriented Method of Learning on the variables selected for the study.

2. **Web Integrated Language Learning**: ‘Web’ is a system of interlinked hypertext documents accessed via the internet. With a web browser, one can view web pages that may contain text, images, videos and other multimedia and navigate between them using hyperlinks (Kumar, 2011). World Wide Web (WWW) is a collection of globally distributed text and multimedia documents and files and other network services linked in such a way as to create an immense electronic library from which information can be retrieved quickly by intuitive searches. In this study, **Web Integrated Language Learning** is the process of drawing from and utilizing the services or resources of the Web into the English language classroom for the fulfillment of learning English. Thus, it stands for Web Integrated English Language Learning.

3. **Language Anxiety**: This can be defined as the fear or apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in the second or foreign language (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993). ‘Language Anxiety’ is a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the (foreign) language learning process (Horwitz et al., 1986). In this study, **Language Anxiety** refers to the feeling of uneasiness, worry, nervousness and apprehension experienced by learners when learning or using the English language. These feelings may arise from any second or foreign language context whether associated with the productive skills of speaking and writing, or the receptive skills of reading and listening. Thus, it indicates English Language Anxiety.

4. **Achievement**: It refers to the degree of success or accomplishment in a given area (Dictionary of Education, 2008).
Introduction

In this study, **Achievement in English** indicates the relative level of academic accomplishment in English by the students.

5. **Secondary School Students**: It refers to those students studying in classes recognised by the Government of Kerala for giving instruction at standards VIII, IX and X *(SCERT, 2014)*. In this study, Secondary School Students refers to those students studying in Standard IX.

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study.

1. Web Integrated Language Learning will be significantly more effective than Activity Oriented Method of Learning in reducing **English Language Anxiety** among Secondary School Students
   i. for the Total Sample,
   ii. for their Sub Samples based on Gender, Locale of School and Management of School, &
   iii. for the six Components of English Language Anxiety, viz. Listening Apprehension, Speaking Apprehension, Reading Apprehension, Writing Apprehension, Fear of Negative Evaluation and Test Anxiety.

2. Web Integrated Language Learning will be significantly more effective than Activity Oriented Method of Learning in improving **Interest in English** among Secondary School Students
   i. for the Total Sample &
   ii. for their Sub Samples based on Gender, Locale of School and Management of School.
3. Web Integrated Language Learning will be significantly more effective than Activity Oriented Method of Learning in enhancing **Achievement in English** among Secondary School Students
   
   i. for the Total Sample & 
   
   ii. for their Sub Samples based on Gender, Locale of School and Management of School.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were

1. to compare the effectiveness of Web Integrated Language Learning and of Activity Oriented Method of Learning in reducing **English Language Anxiety** among Secondary School Students
   
   i. for the Total Sample, 
   
   ii. for their Sub Samples based on Gender, Locale of School and Management of School, &
   
   iii. for the six Components of English Language Anxiety, viz. Listening Apprehension, Speaking Apprehension, Reading Apprehension, Writing Apprehension, Fear of Negative Evaluation and Test Anxiety.

2. to compare the effectiveness of Web Integrated Language Learning and of Activity Oriented Method of Learning in improving **Interest in English** among Secondary School Students
   
   i. for the Total Sample &
   
   ii. for their Sub Samples based on Gender, Locale of School and Management of School.
3. to compare the effectiveness of Web Integrated Language Learning and of Activity Oriented Method of Learning in enhancing **Achievement in English** among Secondary School Students
   i. for the Total Sample &
   ii. for their Sub Samples based on Gender, Locale of School and Management of School.

**1.7 Methodology in Brief**

The **Experimental Method** with the **Pretest–Posttest Non-equivalent Groups Design** were adopted for the study. **Stratified Random Sampling Technique** was used for selection of the sample giving due representation to Gender, Locale of School and Management of School. The **sample** comprised 260 Secondary School Students of Standard IX studying the State Syllabus of Kerala.

The variables involved in the study included independent and dependent variables. The **independent variables** were the Web Integrated Language Learning and the Activity Oriented Method of Learning while the **dependent variables** were English Language Anxiety, Interest in English and Achievement in English.

The **materials** and the **tools** used for the study were: 1. Lesson Plans for Web Integrated English Language Learning, 2. Lesson Transcripts Plans for Activity Oriented Method of Learning English, 3. Scale on English Language Anxiety, 4. Inventory on Interest in English, and 5. Test on Achievement in English.

The **statistical techniques** employed for analysis of data include Arithmetic Mean, Standard Deviation, Critical Ratio (t-test), Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA).
1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study intended to investigate the effectiveness of Web Integrated Language Learning on English Language Anxiety, Interest in English and Achievement in English among Secondary School Students. Web Integrated Language Learning was expected to help Secondary School Students to learn English using a minimum of instructional hours. The findings of the study are expected to be valid and generalisable to other similar samples to a considerable extent.

1) Web Integrated English Language Learning is expected to help learners to overcome the difficulties in learning English. It helps them to reduce their English Language Anxiety.

2) It is also expected that Web Integrated Language Learning will enable the Secondary School Students to improve their Interest in English.

3) It is expected that Web Integrated Language Learning will help the Secondary School Students to learn more meaningfully and effectively and thereby to enhance their Achievement in English.

4) The findings of the study is also expected to serve as guidelines to teachers and curriculum planners in the field of education, especially in English Language Education, for adopting innovative methods for curriculum transaction.

Sincere effort was taken to avoid errors so as to make the results of the study valid and reliable. Since Web Integrated Language Learning in English was teacher assisted, and several tools were to be administered both as pre- and post-tests, great care was taken of all aspects in the conduct of the study. Yet some limitations have crept in due to practical reasons. Though the population for the study was Secondary School Students of Kerala, the Investigator was unable to give district wise representation, while selecting the sample for the study. Also, only students from Standard IX were selected for the experiment. Besides, various other variables that may have influence on English Language
Introduction

Anxiety, Interest in English and Achievement in English could not be brought under the preview of the study.

1.9 Organisation of the Research Report

The report of the study is organised in six chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction describes the background, need and significance of the study, the statement of the problem, definitions of key terms, hypotheses, objectives, the methodology adopted, and the scope and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Overview details the perspectives on Web Integrated Language Learning and on Language Anxiety.

Chapter 3: Review of Related Literature summarises the literature reviewed under the areas of study, viz. those related to Web Integrated Language Learning and Language Anxiety.

Chapter 4: Methodology explains the research method adopted for the study, variables of the study, sample selected, design of the experiment, materials and tools used for the study, procedure adopted for collection of data, and the statistical techniques employed for data analysis.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Interpretation of Data statistically analyses the data gathered, arrives at findings, discusses them and makes interpretations.

Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusions and Suggestions presents the study in retrospect, conclusions based on the findings, tests the tenability of the hypotheses, gives the educational implications of the study and provides suggestions for further research.
The relevance of bibliography cannot be ignored in the context of a genuine research report. The format prescribed by the *American Psychological Association (2010)* is adopted for citations within the text as well as for the Bibliography. A Bibliography pertaining to the study is attached.

The research report will be incomplete without the appendices. The Appendices pertaining to this study are provided at the end of the Research Report.