Chapter- 6

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

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6.1 Introduction:

In this chapter the researcher attempted to summarise critically the findings of the present research on ‘An Evaluation of Yuvakbharati- a coursebook in English introduced for higher secondary level in Maharashtra’. The present study was undertaken with a view to evaluate objectively the curriculum of English prescribed for higher secondary schools in the state of Maharashtra. In order to accomplish the study the researcher collected data through the questionnaire and the test which is being tabulated and analysed in the previous chapter. This analysis brought out several facts to the forefront. Significant conclusions and observations are drawn on the basis of the analysis of the data. The major findings of the present study are presented as below.

6.2 Conclusions:

Judging from the facts drawn out from the analysis of the questionnaire for the teachers of English, it is therefore concluded that:

i) A large proportion of the teachers of English at higher secondary level have clear and proper perception of ‘all the three objectives’ of teaching English, as indicated in Table No.5.1, viz. ‘to enable learners to enjoy and appreciate the beauty of literary works’, ‘to enable learners to listen with fair comprehension and get a global understanding of it’, and ‘to enable learners to be prepared for activities like group discussion, debating, reading & writing, translation & communication etc’. Hence, it seems reasonable to conclude that unless the objectives are clearly understood,
the teacher cannot proceed to formulate proper teaching strategies.

ii) The syllabus included in the coursebook Yuvakbharati has clearly stated objectives.

iii) All the teachers of English have proper and clear perception of the objectives of teaching English at higher secondary level.

iv) The syllabus included in the coursebook Yuvakbharati is consistent with the other aspects of curriculum.

v) A significant proportion of teachers teaching English at plus-two stage preferred more to teach grammar than other aspects of language. It might be right to state that frequently such teachers teach English as they were taught before by their teachers who also have been taught in the same way before. Such practice is bound to affect the extent of students’ exposure to English which will definitely limit their learning of English. Therefore, it seems logical to conclude that the teachers are not keeping pace with what changes are taking place in the field of ELT.

vi) In the light of the data clarified by the Table No. 5.6, it may be inferred that in the coursebook Yuvakbharati the target behavior is clearly spelt out.

vii) A large proportion of teachers of English felt that the syllabus in the coursebook Yuvakbharati has much flexibility, as is indicated by Table No. 5.7.

viii) The syllabus which is included there in the coursebook Yuvakbharati spelt out clear methodology. But the practice of teaching is dominated, as indicated by Table No. 5.8 &
5.9, mostly by grammar translation method and communicative approach.

ix) Most of the teachers of English confessed that dictionaries do play an important role in developing students’ vocabulary. But in practice they prefer to use only bilingual dictionaries in teaching of vocabulary.

x) A significant proportion of teachers felt that in the coursebook Yuvakbharati the new vocabulary items are presented in an appropriate way so that, the text is understandable and the students are able to retain new vocabulary.

xi) Most of the teachers claimed that the coursebook Yuvakbharati presents the grammatical rules in an ascending order and logical manner.

xii) A large proportion of teachers reported that the coursebook Yuvakbharati instructs learners clearly about the activities which they have to perform to learn the language.

xiii) Most of the teachers, as indicated in Table No. 5.16 & 5.17, were of the view that the exercises in the coursebook Yuvakbharati do promote the learners to think critically about the text.

xiv) Judging from the findings of Table No. 5.17 it becomes evident that a large number of teachers of English feels that the reading selections in the coursebook Yuvakbharati are authentic pieces of language.

xv) However, one of the major findings of this research is that the coursebook Yuvakbharati provides the text selections which are representative of the variety of literary genres; as well as the illustrations which are simple and close
enough to the text that they add to its meaning rather than detracting from it; and these texts in the coursebook Yuvakbharati make comprehension easier by addressing one new concept at a time instead of multiple new concepts.

xvi) There are interactive and task-based activities in the coursebook Yuvakbharati that require learners to use new vocabulary to communicate.

xvii) For the teachers of English at higher secondary level in Maharashtra the coursebook Yuvakbharati, as they claim, is an adequate and interesting document to achieve the course objectives. They have even gone further to state that it mostly incorporates with current thinking in linguistics, sociology, psychology, and pedagogy.

However, as far as the students’ performance is concerned, and judging from the findings of the analysis of test paper, it can be stated without hesitation that the performance of students is not as satisfactory as it should be. The major findings from the question-wise analysis of the test papers were as follows:

xviii) Most of the students are able to identify easily the answers of simple comprehension and complex comprehension questions from the text based on the reading comprehension or reading for communication which is one of the important objectives of ELT at higher secondary level in Maharashtra. Therefore, it could be concluded that the performance of students in factual questions is that as satisfactory as it expected to be.
xix) A significant number of students cannot deduce the answers of interpretation / inference questions from the information given in the text directly. Hence, the performance of students is not satisfactory in these questions.

xx) Judging from the findings of performance of students, it is painful to note that maximum number of students cannot relate the given text to their own lives and interest. Therefore, it seems logical to conclude that the performance of students in personal response questions is disappointing and far from satisfactory.

xxi) Although the curriculum of English gave more importance to the teaching of vocabulary as an important objective of ELT at higher secondary level in Maharashtra, still majority of the students cannot use their knowledge of sense relations and word-formation, and to workout the meaning of words in context. Thus, the performance of students appears to be poor in vocabulary questions.

xxii) Inspite of the abundant attention, weightage, and efforts given to the teaching of grammar as an objective of ELT at higher secondary level in Maharashtra, still the performance of students in grammar-questions is not that as satisfactory as it should be.

xxiii) The performance of students in summary writing, writing composition and note-making questions appears to be satisfactory.

xxiv) The performance of students in report-writing, which is a form of an important written communication skill in their
years of study and, later when they begin their career, is disappointing and poor.

xxv) The performance of students in letter writing, which is an important interactional written communication skill, is that as satisfactory as it should be.

xxvi) The performance of students in story-writing and essay-writing questions is also disappointing and far from satisfactory.

However, judging from the facts drawn out from the objective-wise analysis of test papers, the researcher concluded as follows:

xxvii) The performance of students in attaining the course objective No. 1 viz. ‘to develop his / her language skills to a fair degree of proficiency’ is disappointing and far from satisfactory.

xxviii) The performance of students in attaining the course objective No.2 viz. ‘to acquire communication skills in English useful in real-life situation’ appears to be satisfactory.

xxix) The performance of students in attaining the course objective No. 3 viz. ‘to enrich his / her vocabulary’ appears to be poor and disappointing.

xxx) Inspite of the concentrated efforts of teachers of English to achieve the course objective No. 4 viz. ‘to use English with appropriate grammatical forms’ still the performance of students in attaining this objective is not that as satisfactory as it should be.
xxx) The performance of students in attaining the course objective No.5 viz. ‘to develop reference skills and inculcate self-study habits’ seems to be satisfactory.

xxxi) The performance of students in attaining the course objective No.6 viz. ‘to use English not only as a library language but also as an important language of communication’ certainly appears to be disappointing and far from satisfactory.

xxii) The performance of students in attaining the course objective No.7, viz. ‘to cultivate a broad, human, and cultural outlook’ appears to be satisfactory.

Moreover, the researcher drew out the following major facts from the correlation analysis and concluded as:

xxxiii) However, one of the major findings of this study is that a significant correlation is found between grammar questions and all composition questions (guided or otherwise) i.e. summary, composition, Note-making, and letter writing; whereas, negative or no correlation is observed between grammar questions and report writing, story-writing, and essay writing respectively.

xxxiv) There is a close relationship between one-two sentence answer questions and summary writing (guided composition); whereas, there is no relationship between one-two sentence answer questions and report-writing (guided composition).

xxxv) There is a significant correlation between free composition questions (i.e. letter writing and Essay writing) and guided composition questions (i.e. Note making and Story writing).
xxxvii) There is a positive and moderate degree of correlation of the marks of all the questions together with marks of factual questions and marks of grammar questions respectively.

6.3 Validation of Hypothesis:

Hypothesis No. 1:

'The learners are able to attain the objectives of the course curriculum to acquire the English language.'

This hypothesis is tested by examining the performance of students in the attainment of the following seven course objectives:

Objective No. 1:

"To develop his/her language skills to a fair degree of proficiency."

The researcher set a question on story-writing (Guided composition) to check the performance of students in the achievement of the course objective No.1. The researcher found that out of 200 responses of 200 students, as shown earlier in Table No. 5.48, 55 (27.50%) were found correct, the average of which is counted as 0.28. The Mean and S.D of the correct responses, as indicated in Table No. 5.49 is 0.28 and 0.04 respectively which clearly reveals that the performance of students in the attainment of the course objective No. 1 is disappointing and far from satisfactory.

Objective No. 2:

'To acquire communication skills in English useful in real life situation.'
This objective has been closely examined by checking the student's performance in composition questions (guided or otherwise) i.e. summary writing, composition writing, report, and letter writing. From the results of Table No. 5.50, mentioned earlier, it is observed that out of 800 responses of 200 students, 477 (59.63%) were found correct, the average of which is calculated as 2.39. However, the Mean (2.39) and S.D. (0.25) of the correct responses, as shown earlier in Table No. 5.51, reveals the performance of students in the attainment of the course objective No. 2 to be satisfactory.

Objective No. 3:

'To enrich his/her vocabulary'.

This objective has been tested by the close examination of the students' performance in vocabulary questions which is indicated earlier in Table No. 5.52. The content of this table shows that out of 2000 responses of 200 students 412 (20.60%) were found correct, the average of which is worked out as 2.06; whereas Table No. 5.53 presents the Mean (i.e.2.06) and S.D. (i.e.0.34) of the correct responses, all these clearly indicate that the students' performance in attaining the course objective No. 3 is poor and disappointing.

Objective No.4:

'To use English with appropriate grammatical forms'.

The researcher tested this objective on the basis of the students' performance in grammar questions. The findings of Table No. 5.54 presents that out of 8200 responses of 200 students, 3638 (44.37%) were found correct, the average of which is counted as 18.19; while Table No. 5.55 brings Mean and S.D. of correct responses which have been calculated as 18.19 and 0.98
respectively. These findings, therefore, clearly imply that the students' performance in attaining the course objective No. 4 is not as good as expected.

**Objective No.5:**

'To develop reference skills and inculcate self-study habits'.

This objective, No. 5, has been tested through the question on guided composition i.e. a question on Note-Making. Out of 200 responses of 200 students, as indicated earlier in Table No. 5.56, as many as 177 (88.50%) were found correct, the average of which is worked out as 0.89. However, the Mean and S.D. of correct responses, as shown earlier in Table No. 5.57, comes as 0.89 and 0.12 respectively which enables the researcher to conclude logically that the performance of students in the achievement of the course objective No. 5 seems to be satisfactory.

**Objective No. 6:**

'To use English not only as a library language but also as an important language of communication'.

This objective has been tested by examining the performance of students in a free composition i.e. a question on Essay writing. Out of 200 responses of 200 students, as shown earlier in Table No. 5.58, 88 (41%) were found correct, the average of which is calculated as 0.40; whereas, the Mean and S.D. of correct responses, as indicated in Table No. 5.59, is worked out as 0.40 and 0.04 respectively which makes evident that in spite of the considerable importance and more weightage given to the teaching of composition still the performance of students in attaining this course objective appears to be disappointing and far from satisfactory.
Objective No. 7:

'To cultivate a broad, humane and cultural outlook'.

This objective has been tested through the students' performance in poetry and letter writing questions. Out of 800 responses of 200 students, as indicated in Table No. 5.60, 493 (61.60%) were found correct, the average of which is calculated as 2.47; however, Table No.5.61 presents the Mean and S.D. of correct responses which is worked out as 2.47 and 0.24 respectively, which clearly indicates that the performance of students in the attainment of the course objective No. 7 appears to be satisfactory.

From the foregoing objective-wise performance analysis, it is observed that out of seven course objectives the students, on the one hand, are able to attain only three objectives i.e. objective No. 2, 5 and 7 and on the other hand, they fail to attain four course objectives i.e. objective No. 1, 3, 4 and 6 respectively.

Hence, it may be noted that the performance of students in attaining most of the course objectives appears to be poor and far from satisfactory. Therefore, it may be said that Hypothesis No. 1 is not validated.

Hypothesis No. 2:

'The present curriculum consisting of the course book Yuvakbharati is an adequate document for teaching / learning of English at higher secondary level in Maharashtra.'

This Hypothesis is tested by the close examination of students' performance in factual and grammar questions.

From Table No. 5.24 and 5.25, mentioned earlier, it is observed that out of 3000 responses of 200 students in factual
questions, 1932 (64.40%) were found correct, the mean and S.D. of which, as indicated earlier in Table No. 5.25, is worked out as 9.66 and 1.00 respectively, all these clearly indicate the better performance of students in factual questions.

However, the findings of Table No. 5.54 and 5.55 present the students' performance in grammar questions. From these tables it is observed that out of 8200 responses of 200 students, 3638 (44.37%) were found correct, the mean and S.D. of which comes, as shown earlier in Table No. 5.55, as 18.19 and 0.98 respectively, all these imply the fact that the students' performance in grammar questions is not satisfactory like the factual questions.

As there is a positive and moderate degree of correlation, as shown earlier in Table No. 5.68 & 5.69, of marks of all the questions together with the marks of factual questions (i.e.+0.49) and marks of grammar questions (i.e.+0.51) respectively, still out of the 7 course objectives the students fail to attain 4 objectives to learn the English language. Hence, it may be noted that the present curriculum in the course book Yuvakbharati is not an adequate document for teaching / learning of English at higher secondary level in Maharashtra. Hence, it may be said that the hypothesis No. 2 is also not validated.

The findings of tables (Table No. 5.22 and 5.23) when compared with the findings of tables (Table No. 5. 48, 49; 5.52,53; 5.54,55; and 5.58,59) point at apparent discrepancies between teachers' opinion about the course book Yuvakbharati stating that it is an adequate and interesting document to achieve the course objectives and for incorporating it with current thinking in linguistics, sociology, psychology and pedagogy, and the real
performance of students in attaining the course objectives to learn
the English language at the higher secondary level in Maharashtra.
In other words, their views regarding the adequacy of the course
book do not correspond with the actual performance of the students
in the test to achieve the course objectives. One cannot guess about
the reasons why the teachers do express their satisfaction regarding
the course book Yuvakbharati, in spite of such a poor performance
of the students. It could be either be because of a copybook response
to the questionnaire or because of clear awareness regarding the real
situation of the students. In either case there is an urgent need for
reconsideration of the whole process of syllabus designing as well as
that of teaching / learning.

6.4 Suggestions :

In view of the foregoing analysis, it seems necessary that the
whole ELT establishment at higher secondary level in Maharashtra
has to be viewed critically and various measures have to be taken, if
its teaching-learning has to be effective. Following major
suggestions made by the researcher for improving English language
teaching/learning situation at higher secondary level in Maharashtra
are:

i) In the context of Maharashtra English language teaching
must be analysed more closely and critically, especially, as
far as the aims and objectives of ELT and learning are
concerned because they are the infrastructure on which any
sound teaching / learning is based and any reform in
English ought to begin first by stating unambiguously its
aims and objectives. In reforming the ELT in Maharashtra
we have to take into account the national and state level
needs English may have to serve in the wake of globalization. The only way to improve English language teaching is to lay down proper and achievable aims and objectives of ELT and to endeavour to achieve them. We ought, therefore, to consider carefully what we are trying to do when we are teaching a foreign language like English. Therefore, teachers and learners should be aware of the importance of English language. They should also be aware of the aims and objectives of English language teaching / learning. Without proper knowledge of these aims and objectives they will neither be able to organize the teaching / learning nor will they be able to create proper interest in it.

ii) Of the four linguistic skills, listening is the most neglected in our curricula. It was believed that English was only a library language in India; so our learners were expected merely to learn to read and write in English. If we desire to make better progress in ELT, its teaching should be directed to speaking and listening, as these have acquired great significance in today’s age of technological explosion. What is required, therefore, is that we should lay greater emphasis on the communication needs of our students while teaching them English as a second or foreign language.

iii) It will be more profitable for the ELT in Maharashtra if there is a negotiation between teachers and planners in respect of designing of syllabuses and planning of curricula. However, in practice we find that syllabuses are often designed and curricula planned by people who may
not be able to define a syllabus or evaluate it. Hence, it results into a futile exercise where ‘experts’ sit and substitute one textbook with another. Further, it is often felt that it is the sole prerogative of the board of studies to design the syllabus and teachers have no role to play at this stage. All that they are expected to do is to implement the syllabus which is ‘given’ to them. However, unless teachers know the rationale—the ‘why’ of the syllabus—they will not have the conviction to translate it into a programme of action. What is needed, therefore, is that the teachers should know what constitutes a syllabus. We should make them aware of the ‘what’ and ‘why’ of the curriculum which will enable the teacher to understand how the syllabus should be implemented. This will decrease, to a considerable extent, the degree of misunderstanding of teachers regarding the curriculum; and ultimately improve teaching / learning.

iv) There is an immediate need to make teachers adopt a suitable method for English language teaching in Maharashtra. Without proper method of ELT its teaching is bound to be lopsided and proper learning cannot be ensured. The issue of teaching method in any language teaching situation crucially influences classroom progress. In Maharashtra, teachers are seen involved in the use of mother tongue in the teaching of English and, therefore, a distinction has to be made between teaching of English as communication and the teaching of English as translation. Teachers must be aware that the excessive use of the mother tongue cannot serve the purpose of ELT nor can it
lead to proper learning of English because translation may give meaning and lessen the burden of the teacher and can help quick comprehension of a linguistic item but it does not help to learn all the language skills. It limits the students’ exposure to English language. Therefore, we need to evolve a suitable methodology to ensure that the ELT practices are on the right track.

v) Easy access to different types of dictionaries should be made to students to develop their vocabulary. One of the main tasks of the teacher is to encourage the students at all times to learn new words and their use. The teacher should recommend to the students a good dictionary. The class should also be given special training in the use of a dictionary and in gleaning such information as can be obtained from it about a word. The teachers should make students to realise that besides spelling, pronunciation, stress and meaning, the dictionary gives them grammatical information and illustrative sentences as well. Further, the textbooks that are intended for students should be readable; a text containing too many new words is unreadable. The new words that the students have to study should be from within the word list. A few words from outside the list may be there in the text; if they are not too many no great difficulty will arise for the teachers and his students. Moreover, the teaching of vocabulary should be contextualized instead of its direct teaching. To enrich the vocabulary and stock of structures with the students, it would be appropriate to introduce the students to multiple words having similar meanings (synonyms); multiple
words with opposite meaning (antonyms); and the alternative structures that could be used to convey an idea, thought or an expression.

vi) More attention should be paid to the teaching of writing skill. Writing is a productive skill and in the absence of the use of spoken form in the common life, writing assignments and activities can compensate a lot for it. Teachers of English should, therefore, undertake the task of giving a sound knowledge of English to our students keeping in mind a radically enlarged view of the function of English. The emphasis ought to be on good English and not on English just as a ‘library language’ or as a language a working knowledge of which can help get information and knowledge from books written in English without having the ability to use the language for intelligent discussion and communication. Therefore, the teachers of English should lay greater emphasis on the communication needs of the students while teaching them English in the classrooms.

vii) The teacher should give proper attention to the teaching of grammar to enable students to use English with appropriate grammatical forms. The structures of English, such as tenses, verbs, compounds, word classics, articles, reported speech, voice, etc., should be sufficiently drilled in the classrooms. The teacher should, therefore, be eclectic in his approach; he need not accept any one theory in toto; he should select what is best suited for his purpose in the classrooms. He should explain and describe the grammatical aspects of structures, illustrate them with
examples and lay down certain rules for his students’
guidance and practice.

viii) The measure which would give more efficiency to ELT is that students should be provided with suitable and authentic graded readings in English. Reading skill as one of the major aims of ELT cannot be attained without prescribing suitable materials for reading to supplement the teaching of English. It is because in a language teaching situation the students should have the ability to comprehend whatever he reads, and this largely depends on the presentation and gradation of materials used for developing this skill. Therefore, the students should be provided with such textbooks which adequately prepare students for the type of pronunciation, language structures, grammar, idioms, vocabulary and conversational rules, routines and strategies that they will have to use in real-life situations. The scripted un-authentic language found in many textbooks does not lend itself to communicative practice but instead can lead to an oversimplification of language and unrealistic views of real-life situations.

ix) If possible the teacher himself / herself should create good teaching materials in view of the interests and needs of the students. It would help keep classroom environment lively and enjoyable.

x) The teacher should encourage and ensure participation of all the students in classroom activities, and should ensure that none feels ignored or neglected.

xi) Writing skill could be developed with the help of the regular and sufficient practice, involving the individuals,
groups or all the class. Tasks, involving the writing practice, could be given as the class or home work. Intensive home work would perhaps be helpful in removing the phobia of the subject that lies in the minds of the students.

xii) Learning of English depends more or less on the time allotted for its teaching. To improve the ELT situation, the periods allotted for the teaching of English should be increased. More periods of English means more chance for learners’ exposure to the language and hence better chances to learn it.

xiii) The teachers play an important role in teaching English. The teacher should act as a ‘facilitator’ in language classroom and not as a ‘dictator’. They need to have a perfect blend of the English language teacher and that of the English literature teacher. Their prejudices against one or the other are bound to hamper his / her professional abilities, duties, and responsibilities. The teachers should be academically and professionally qualified to make every effort to increase students’ interests in the subject. They should increase their teaching knowledge by reading various related books and periodicals to be well-aware of the thin line of demarcation between teaching ‘about the language’ and ‘teaching the language’ itself, and should tackle both skillfully.

xiv) It was observed that motivation plays an important role in acquisition of the linguistic skills, particularly of the second language. Students with fair attitude and motivation towards the language showed comparatively a
good level of acquisition and those with wrong attitudes and poor motivation showed poor acquisition. Therefore, concentrated efforts in view of this are needed to be made by the teachers, the parents, the administrators, the policy makers and all others involved in the teaching of English to change drastically the wrong attitudes of the students and fill them up with right attitudes and proper motivation to learn English.

xv) Ample exposure of the language should be given to students. Students on their own can avail of ample exposure of English available easily now-a-days through electronic and print media. They should make a habit to watch programmes, interviews, discussions, news items in English on various TV channels, at least for half-an-hour daily. Similarly, newspapers, weeklies and monthlies in English could also best be used for the cause. This habit gradually would enhance their overall acquisition of English.

xvi) More attention should be paid to rectify students’ common errors and defects in learning of various aspects of English such as grammar, comprehension, communication, and composition, etc., and subsequent feedback should be provided to the students.
6.5 Suggestions for Further Research:

i) Research should be made to probe the effectiveness of textbooks prescribed for the teaching of English.

ii) There is a need to investigate objectively the curriculum of English prescribed for higher secondary level in Maharashtra.

iii) There is an urgent need for further research into the attitudes and motivations of both teachers and students towards the learning of English in Maharashtra.

iv) There is also an urgent need for research to investigate into the methods and approaches of teaching English used in higher secondary schools in Maharashtra.

v) Research should be made to investigate the ELT situations in Maharashtra.

vi) Research has to be carried out to investigate into the common errors committed by students of English at plus-two stage. Moreover, each one of the course objectives laid down to teach / learn the language needs to be investigated separately to have more clear picture of the students errors and difficulties.

vii) There is an urgent need for teacher training so as to make the teachers aware of the ground realities.