CHAPTER SIX

A SPECIAL VOCABULARY FOR PRE-UNIVERSITY COMMERCE

"They (students 'to whom English is merely a medium of factual intercommunication, both spoken and printed') need a vocabulary which is capable of explaining the meaning of the technical terms required in the course."

- Michael West

This investigation was initiated with certain assumptions, which were later supported by questionnaire respondents and interviewees. One of these assumptions was that it is possible to evolve special vocabularies for Commerce and Science. Over a dozen vocabulary items related to Commerce, and about the same number of items related to Science, which are used in the experiments described in Chapter Five, are specimens of Special Vocabulary items for the two faculties.

A sound teaching of English as a library language requires that faculty-wise comprehensive Special Vocabulary lists be prepared and followed; but evolving a comprehensive Special Vocabulary for a single faculty could be a huge and time-consuming task.

Expending time and energy after such a project only in the light of the investigator's insight at this stage could also prove ill advised. It is necessary that any work on the project is preceded by a thorough discussion
among competent persons on all aspects related to the evolution and use of such vocabularies. There is scope for discussion on the actual vocabulary that could be taken as known to college-entrants, the books to be analysed, the nature of vocabulary items to be included in the list, categorization of the vocabulary items included, and so on.

Evolving a comprehensive Special Vocabulary for either Commerce or Science faculty as part of this thesis was, therefore, out of question. It was considered desirable, however, to explore the possibility of evolving a comprehensive Special Vocabulary and demonstrate the basic procedure involved in evolving it. With this view in mind, a Special Vocabulary was evolved in the light of Pre-University Commerce courses of the Gujarat University.

Books and Their Analysis:

There are five subjects (Accountancy, Business Mathematics, Commerce, Commercial Geography and Economics) other than languages taught at the Pre-University level of the Commerce faculty in the Gujarat University. The subjects are more or less common in all the universities in Gujarat. In consultation with experienced teachers
of a leading commerce college, five standard books, one each for the five subjects, were selected for the purpose of vocabulary analysis.

The following are the books selected for the purpose:


It was desirable to have been able to select all five books written by native speakers of English. There cannot, however, be such books designed precisely to meet the requirements of the syllabuses of an Indian University. Therefore, only two (Sr.No.2 and Sr.No.3) of these books are by native speakers of English.
Secondly, these books do not completely cover the Pre-University Commerce courses in the subjects they deal with. The range of the courses they cover is between 75 and 95 per cent. It was checked with the help of subject-teachers if the books had topics outside the courses. Where a book had such topics, they were eliminated. The vocabulary items likely to be outside the School Vocabulary (Appendix F) were first marked and later practically checked against the list.

The Vocabulary:

The process yielded over 2,000 vocabulary items, which were alphabetically listed. The list, which appears in Appendix E, has been named Special Vocabulary Evolved in the Light of Courses for Pre-University Commerce. Words as well as phrases, prefixes and suffixes are the entries in this list. Where necessary, the grammatical category (verb, noun etc.) has been mentioned into brackets against items. Where only a particular meaning of an item is relevant, that meaning has been mentioned into brackets.

The items of the Special Vocabulary for Pre-University Commerce will be found falling into the
following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Illustrations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) Technical</td>
<td>algae, aliquant, horsepower, loco, topography, triangle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Semi-Technical</td>
<td>cereal, humidity, tap (v), tropical, valid, wholesale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) General</td>
<td>binary, compensate, convey, decay, ooze, paucity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Descriptive and</td>
<td>adjunct, elucidate, endeavour, onerous, omnibus, sans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary</td>
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All vocabulary items having even a single occurrence in the books analysed have been entered in the list although the investigator toyed with the idea of following the principles mentioned below for some time.

1. A single occurrence of the items falling into the categories (i) and (ii) should qualify them for a place on the Special Vocabulary, because without their knowledge, important 'contents' of subject-books cannot be comprehended. In all books on the same subject, these items are going to be common.

2. Frequency should be the basis of consideration whether the items falling into categories
(iii) and (iv) should be on the list. These items are used for clarification, elaboration, persuasion, readability and style. They might not be common in all books on the same subject.

The idea, though relevant, was not implemented for a number of reasons. The purpose of this vocabulary was confined to a limited exploration of the possibility of evolving a vocabulary of this nature and a demonstration of the procedure through which a comprehensive Special Vocabulary could be evolved. Perfection was not the aim. As discussed in the beginning of this chapter, a perfect comprehensive Special Vocabulary for a faculty, or for that matter for a single level, can be attempted only after certain related problems have been settled in the light of collective thinking on the subject.

Besides, the School Vocabulary whose knowledge is taken for granted in preparing the Special Vocabulary is itself not free from shortcomings. Certain parts of the courses at Pre-University Commerce, though small, have not been included in the books analysed. Neither are the courses exactly the same in all the universities in Gujarat. Also, the categorization of the kind mentioned above demands an analysis of at least one more set of books on the subject.
Even so, the Special Vocabulary evolved in the light of the courses for Pre-University Commerce of the Gujarat University is a significant contribution to the idea of teaching a 'useful' vocabulary to Commerce students. Since the elements of the subjects in Commerce are introduced at the Pre-University level, this Special Vocabulary is essentially the vocabulary basic to the studies in Commerce. These are the vocabulary items any commerce student - undergraduate or post-graduate - is likely to encounter frequently. Incidentally, the number of special vocabulary items drawn from books on the subjects taught at each of the other three levels is likely to be much smaller than that of the present list.

Though this Special Vocabulary is evolved in view of the courses at Pre-University Commerce level, all its items are not intended to be taught at the same level. Students of Pre-University level cannot be expected to learn all these vocabulary items at a time. Some of them should be introduced at the F.Y.B.Com. level. Just as a
special vocabulary has been evolved on the basis of the courses at Pre-University Commerce, one each can be evolved in the light of courses at F.Y.B.Com., S.Y.B.Com. and T.Y.B.Com. A Comprehensive Special Vocabulary can be prepared by combining the separate vocabularies thus evolved and it should be taught during four years at college. Most of the items of the Comprehensive Special Vocabulary should be taught during the first two years so that before graduation a student can increasingly make use of English books on his subjects. It is possible to cover most of the items of the Comprehensive Special Vocabulary during the first two years, because the number of special vocabulary items at each of the last three levels is not likely to be as large as that at the Pre-University level.

The Special Vocabulary evolved in the light of the Courses at Pre-University Commerce was of great practical value to the investigator even during the investigation. It was used to determine the items on the college vocabulary samples 'useful' to commerce students (Chapter Seven). It was, similarly, used to determine which items of the vocabulary contained by the Model Specimen Passages were 'useful' to commerce students (Chapter Thirteen).